Encounter

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THE FALLEN CITY

RICHARD WOLLHEIM

ime, Sin, & Mr Justice Devlin

COLIN WILSON

The Writer and Publicity

JOSEPH ALSOP

Thoughts on Co-Existence

ELIZABETH HARDWICK

Boston

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The Manœuvre

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The Faith of Darwinism

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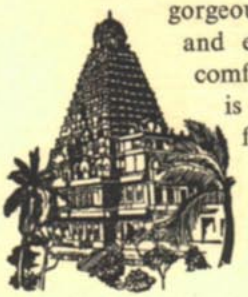

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Encounter

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JONATHAN CAPE

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Wolfdietrich Schnurre

The Manœuvre

THE Officer of the Day was now ready to inform Headquarters that no human being remained within the designated manœuvre-area. The General, it is true, ordered a couple more spot checks, just to be on the safe side, but his anxiety proved unwarranted. Every farm building was deserted; the Tactical Exercise could now begin. The cross-country vehicles carrying the Staff Officers were the first off the mark, followed by a line of jeeps containing the Military Observers. An ambulance brought up the rear. It really was a gorgeous day: a pair of buzzards circled in the sunshine, larks hung high above the heath, and every few hundred yards a shrike lurked in the bushes beside the road, or a glittering flock of yellow-hammers took wing.

The gentlemen were in the very best of temper. It was only a short drive, three-quarters of an hour at the outside, before the General's car turned off the road, the others following, and pulled up beside a low line of heather-covered hills. Here all was in readiness. A field cooker was steaming, the orderlies on the job, while the signallers were busy laying their cables, the folding chairs in position, and the field glasses (also to hand) offered a fine and uninterrupted prospect of the plain below.

Wolfdietrich Schnurre is a young German writer who recently was awarded a Fontane prize for literature in Berlin. "DAS MANÖVER" *is his first story to appear in English. It was translated from the German by Constantine FitzGibbon.*

The General opened the proceedings with a brief outline of the battle plan; the engagement would be primarily one between panzer and infantry units. The General was still a young man, possibly in his late forties, his speech was clipped, his manner disdainful, his tone one of faint irony. He didn't mind arousing the suspicion that he regarded the whole Exercise as something of a farce, for, after all, there was no *Luftwaffe*, was there?

The area in which the Exercise was to take place was bounded, to the north, by an extensive conifer nursery, to the south by a dried-up marsh. To the east lay heathland, shimmering beneath the heat. It was not an easy area to overlook, for it was dotted with clumps of juniper, while the numerous gorse- or heather-grown hillocks and declivities would mean tricky going for the tanks; furthermore, it contained many scattered farms which, as the Adjutant put it, might well have been predestined to be nests of anti-tank and automatic weapons.

BY NOW it was noon. The orderlies had just collected the tin plates off which the gentlemen had eaten their mid-day meal, and from every point on the hillside little clouds of blue cigarette smoke rose into the motionless air. It was now that the twittering of the larks and the monotonous chirping of the crickets began to mingle with other noises, the distant heavy rattle of tracks and the asthmatic grunting of approaching tank engines. Simultaneously, across the entire countryside perambulating bushes were moving which, no sooner noticed, merged quickly into the landscape once again. Only the flocks of

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distraught yellow-hammers, taking to the air now here now there, revealed that the infantry was in fact moving into position.

After some half an hour the first tanks hove in sight—through field glasses—as they nosed their way out of the conifer nursery, followed by small but uncamouflaged units of infantry; and within a few minutes a second armoured force appeared, deeply echeloned, in the neighbourhood of the dry marsh. Droning filled the air, blotting out the song of the larks. Yet these must have continued to twitter, for they remained, fluttering in the sky, exactly as before. Meanwhile, the camouflaged infantry had dug itself in. About the farm buildings, too, the anti-tank and infantry guns had vanished beneath their camouflage netting.

Even those officers who had hitherto stood off to one side, looking rather bored, now felt that the time had come to pick up their field glasses, for the tanks had opened fire. To begin with, they had only peppered the countryside more or less indiscriminately. But when the armoured force coming from the south wheeled inwards, thus becoming the second arm of a wide pincer movement that must eventually link up with those others coming down from the north, the tank gunners began to concentrate their fire on their specific target areas.

The infantry, being dug in, simply let the tanks roll over them. They waited until the bulk of the armour had passed. Then section after section of troops, supported here by anti-tank and there by infantry guns, came out of cover and attacked. Some went for the supporting infantry following behind the armour; others, bringing a variety of special weapons into play, counter-attacked single tanks, which in their turn went over to the defensive, stubbornly if somewhat clumsily. By now the battle was in full swing.

UNFORTUNATELY, however, the wind had risen. It blew a mixture of dust and smoke from the guns, precisely in the direction of the hillock where the Headquarters Staff had taken up position, and for some time those officers could see nothing whatsoever. All sorts of frightened birds had taken cover in the gorse bushes that surrounded them, goldfinches, yellow-hammers, now and then a shrike. Their fear had made them more trusting, or perhaps they regarded these officers as fellow-inhabitants of their heath, doubtless as distressed by it all as they were. The General tried hard to conceal his vexation, and hardly succeeded; but then, it was really too annoying, to be thus flouted by the wind. Suddenly, and unexpectedly, the noise of battle died away, and at the very same moment a quick gust parted the veils of dust and smoke, revealing an extraordinary spectacle to the assembled officers. The entire plain, now reduced by the pincer movement of the tanks to rather less than one square mile, was alive with sheep, obviously frightened out of their wits, dashing hither and thither, nose to tail, in amazingly broad columns that collided, came together, and parted again. Embedded in this fleecy sea stood the tanks.

They had stopped, and in order to diminish the creatures' panic had even switched off their engines. The guns had likewise fallen silent, and through field glasses it was possible here and there to see soldiers' faces appearing at the windows of the nearer farm buildings, and even to note their expression as they gazed, fascinated, at the unusual spectacle. Now the turrets of the tanks began to open, and each would disgorge two or three oil-smeared heads. Until a moment ago the countryside had re-echoed to the earsplitting noise of battle. Now the only sound was the pattering of thousands and thousands of sheep's hooves, resounding from the dry, parched soil like an ominous, enormous roll of drums, punctuated only by an occasional, half-smothered *baaaaaaaaa*.

The General, his complexion mottled with rage, looked towards the Officer of the Day, whose responsibility it had been to ensure the evacuation of the area.

He had gone quite pale. He stammered a few lame excuses, and then attempted to justify himself by maintaining that the sheep must have broken into the area from some point beyond the perimeter.

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Remembering that there were guests present, the General forbore with difficulty from replying. Instead, he picked up the field telephone and spoke to the Command Post. The sheep, he ordered in a voice that trembled, must be disposed of forthwith: the responsible officers must issue orders to this effect without delay.

Over at the Command Post the officers stared at one another. They, too, were aware how unfortunate a situation it was. But how were they supposed to turn back these floods of demented sheep? In their opinion, the General was only passing the buck. Still, they ordered the tanks of the northern flank to fire, and simultaneously told the southern ones to open a passageway through which the animals might pour out, hoping by this ruse to encourage the beasts to stop milling around, form ranks, and dash off in a more or less orderly rout.

BUT the animals chose to follow a very different logic. True enough, the salvoes from the tank guns caused a great wave of terror to pass through the enormous flock, but when the head of the flood reached the intended exit, the creatures suddenly stopped short, reared up, and plunged back into the encirclement, more demented even than before. The infantrymen crouching in their foxholes had a hard time avoiding being trampled by the hooves stampeding overhead.

The General could no longer conceal his vexation. Once again he telephoned the Command Post, roared into the mouthpiece that he would deal with the responsible officers just as soon as the Exercise was over, and now, perhaps, they would be so good as to observe how a flock of sheep *should* be handled, for he, the General, would show them personally. Then, he apologised to his guests, ordered the Officer of the Day to deputise for him in his absence, strode down the hillside to his jeep, and had himself driven, as far as this was possible, into the turmoil of sheep's bodies.

It was not as far as he had thought. The animals were terrified of the tanks, but in their overwhelming panic the General's jeep was, by comparison, a quite insignificant object. Almost immediately it was embedded, and so thoroughly that it could move neither forwards nor back.

The General had intended to call out a couple of infantry platoons, and with their help drive the sheep towards the exit prepared for them; now he was forced to realise that this plan was impractical. But he was at the same time compelled to see something else, namely that he had made a fool of himself. The back of his neck burned: no doubt the military attachés were watching him through field glasses; and his ears hummed with the witticisms and laughter that he imagined being exchanged at his expense. A fury possessed him. He, the veteran of two world wars, scarred on a dozen battlefields, was he to be made an object of ridicule by this confusion of dim-witted beasts capable of obeying nothing save their herd instincts?

He could feel the blood rushing to his head, as he shouted at the driver to step on the accelerator and drive on. The driver obeyed, and the wheels screeched as they dug into the parched soil. But the jeep did not move. The physical force of the enveloping flock was stronger than its horsepower. The General, by now almost mad with rage, drew his revolver from its holster and fired haphazard into the pushing, crowding beasts until the magazine was empty. As he kept firing, one side of his jeep began gently to leave the ground. It seemed to float, as though borne upon gentle waves. The tilt grew more pronounced, and then, before the General and his driver could throw their weight over to that side, it slowly and almost carefully toppled over.

It took some time for the General to fight his way upwards through the mass of trampling hooves. Extricating his own legs from beneath the metal side of the jeep, he got to his feet at last, and dazedly looked about him.

THE world seemed made of sheep. As far as the eye could see, fleecy back succeeded fleecy back, and in this sea of wool

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the tanks reared up like steel islands about to be overwhelmed by this encircling, animal flood.

Only now did the General notice that a very small space had opened up, a space containing himself and his jeep, and that here the sheep seemed to be rebuffed or held back by something. The General was about to attend to his driver, who had caught a nasty knock and was lying unconscious, when he became aware that there was a third living creature within his very small, sheep-free enclosure: a gigantic, heavily-breathing ram.

It stood there motionless, waiting, its shaggy head with the blunt, twisted horns sunk forward. The whites of its eyes were tinged with pink; its chest and front legs trembled like a running engine; its throat and skull near the base of the horns bore the marks of several bullet wounds from which tiny rivulets of almost jet-black blood flowed down into matted, burr-entangled wool.

The General understood at once: he had wounded the animal, and now here were the two of them, face to face, at bay. He reached for his revolver; the chamber was empty. Carefully, without removing his gaze from the ram, he took a cautious step towards the jeep which he intended to put between himself and the animal. But no sooner did the beast see his enemy move than with a couple of bounding leaps he was upon him. The General jumped aside, and the ram's head crashed against the side of the jeep. He shook himself and stood for a moment, half-stunned, staring at the ground.

The General's blood pounded in his pulse and throat, and he felt his forehead and his hands becoming damp with sweat. His anger had fled. He no longer thought about the comments of the gentlemen watching from the hillock. His only thought was: He mustn't kill me, he *must not* kill me. He had ceased to be a general, and was only fear, naked, trembling fear, and nothing existed within him except this fear.

The ram spun about. The General was conscious of an agonizing pain low in his belly: a buzz-saw was screeching inside his head: he had to vomit: and even as he sank to the ground the ram butted him again in the bowels with his heavy, convoluted horns. The General knew that something, some cord that had hitherto bound him to this world, was snapping: the screech of the buzz-saw became one unspeakably monotonous note played upon a violin. He lost consciousness.

No one had guessed that the General was in danger of his life. Some of the tank crews and the officers watching from the hillock, when first they had seen the jeep hemmed in and observed the ram's sudden onslaught upon the General, suspected that something embarrassing and perhaps even humiliating was taking place. To none, however, had it occurred that the ram might be mortally dangerous to the General. When, therefore, the General failed to rise to his feet, the officers' reactions were strange and complicated; a few did their best to ignore what was going on down there; others began to wonder how they might make their way to him through this sea of animals' bodies.

It was the sheep themselves that saved the officers from this unpleasant inability to act. Suddenly, as though in obedience to an unspoken word of command, something resembling a more orderly and circular movement became apparent in their still hectic and chaotic stampede, with more and more of the beasts falling under the sway of this new impetus, until, with equal suddenness, the impetus took a new direction, creating a sort of tidal wave that sucked the entire mass of sheep along with it. They now poured eastwards, towards the heat haze that lay over the heath, and in no time at all the whole enormous flock had vanished behind a huge, pinkish cloud of dust.

By the time the Officer of the Day, and several officers from the Command Post, had reached the overturned jeep, the medical orderlies, assisted by men from the nearer tank crews, had already placed the General's corpse upon an aluminium stretcher, which they were now engaged in carrying to the ambulance. The General's driver helped them.

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To resume the Tactical Exercise seemed, in the circumstances, a mistake. Besides, the tanks would have had to return to their start lines, and this would have involved an expenditure of fuel at least three times as great as what had been anticipated. The senior officer present took it upon himself to call the whole thing off.

The disappointed officers sauntered away to their cross-country vehicles, the drivers switched motors on, and slowly the column of jeeps set off, picking its way past tanks clumsily turning and infantry units now being reassembled. The ambulance brought up the rear.

Soon enough the infantry too marched off, followed by the anti-tank and infantry weapons. Finally, only the field-kitchen remained. Into it the orderlies loaded the folding chairs, while the signallers rolled up their field cable. This, too, was soon done. The driver of the field-kitchen whistled to summon his men, and they clambered aboard, leaving behind a small wet heap of ash carefully doused down; and the field-kitchen, half-braking all the way, rolled slowly down the hillside.

Now the flocks of birds which had sought refuge in the gorse bushes when the exercise began came bravely to life once more. They shook their wings, cleaned themselves meticulously, and flock after flock took off, skywards, up there above the plain, where the almost motionless larks still hung, and once again the song of the larks mingled with the monotonous chirping of the crickets, the humming of the bees, and the drunken screech of the two buzzards.

Ball of Venice

The senseless canal, the sunless wave in Church.
A statue of Colleone in state on a charging horse,
Stern face and long hair
"Beware, beware, a war, a jealous war."

Peaceful night and full moon on architecture
Of Palladio; a *pallazzo* and whispering orchestra.
Pirate, Louis XVI, dancers and Nero nude,
Laughter and chatter—in long room, silence.

Men and women, highwaymen and Venus,
A caress of love, the hands with twenty fingers caress.
Shaded tiled room which fortune blessed
"Even love and heaven, were hand in hand."

Downstairs, the thronging crowd and dancers;
Of incense and sacred Cross of two hundred Churches.
Silent visage of meditation, the downcast eyes of women,
"Beware! Victory of war, not spoils, not money!"

March, 1959 *Michael Swan*

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Colin Wilson

The Writer and Publicity

A Reply to Critics

THE "father figure" of the Beat Generation, Kenneth Rexroth, told me that he bumped into an old friend recently in Provence, and was greeted with the words: "Hello, Frankenstein, what are you doing in Europe? Trying to hide from your monster?" The joke, Rexroth said, was that that was precisely what he was doing in Europe. He created the monster all right. (His manifesto, *Disengagement: the Art of the Beat Generation* was published long before Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*.) But it was the boys on Madison Avenue who galvanised the shambling, half-conscious Petrouchka into its present weird publicity dance. Rexroth fled. Yells and grunts pursued him across the Atlantic.

The other day, I came across Edmund Wilson's description of the famous Dada meetings in Paris in the 1920s. It struck me then how much Tristan Tzara and Raymond Duncan missed by not being born thirty years later. I can imagine the *Daily Express*: "Hello, Mr. Tzara, this is Millicent Progworth here. I'm doing William Hickey to-day. Would you mind giving me your opinion on falsies?" TZARA (gutterally): "I have ceased to wear falsies since the London Transport claimed they occupied too much room in the rush-hour. Try Marlon Brando." As I write, *Woman's Hour* has just rung Bill Hopkins to ask his opinion of seams in lady's stockings, and he replied solemnly: "Straight seams add allure to lovely legs," and the woman said "Thank you so much, Mr. Hopkins," and hung up. And last night the *Evening Standard* woke me up to tell me the Russian rocket had landed on the moon and had I any comment? My comment will not be printed.

All of which leads me to remark that the writer in the fifties ought to be excused for spending a lot of time brooding about the situation of the writer in the fifties. Because there really *is* a situation, and he is really in it. I sometimes feel a peculiar discomfort in talking to writers of an older generation: a sense of different worlds, different languages, different standards. This disappears when I speak with contemporaries like John Braine, Kingsley Amis, John Osborne. They've been through the same mill-race; we meet like fellow criminals who are introduced to one another at a company directors' dinner at Claridge's. We share an insight that would be hard to define in textbook language, as furtive as a taste for tripe and cowheels.

This is an attempt to give my own version of it. It will be prejudiced, lop-sided, egotistic, and self-explanatory. This is because it is really about myself, and I cannot view the subject unemotionally.

A YEAR ago, a new advertising magazine sent me a letter asking for a contribution; they remarked that, since I am known as an expert in the art of self-advertisement, they would appreciate a frank account of my publicity methods. I replied that to ask me how to get publicity is like asking a football how to score goals. I went into some detail to explain the analogy. The magazine printed my letter with a headline: COLIN WILSON EXPLAINS HIS PUBLICITY METHODS. I didn't even get paid for it.

I drew a lesson from this. Obviously, the magazine had nothing to learn from me about the methods of modern journalism. Or maybe they got the idea from my letter. In either case, I should have dropped their letter into the wastepaper basket; nothing can come out of nothing.

To some extent, the writer in the fifties is handling a strange medium. His personality

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and books reach a new audience. And the old audience—the book-buying and library-frequenting public—reacts in a new manner. The very fact that the writer's *personality* is involved is an additional complication. Before television and the gossip columns took an interest in writers, personality only mattered in so far as it emerged in a writer's books. But anyone who has ever met his favourite author knows that nothing is more disastrous and disillusioning than to let the personality get superimposed on the books. Unless the author is an exceptionally unified being, a mutual distortion occurs. There is an effect of double exposure, and both images are reduced to the status of phantoms.

This cuts both ways. The women who listen to Mrs. Dale's Diary are not the only ones who get a weird idea of the author of *Lucky Jim* or *Look Back in Anger*. The serious critics get quite as befuddled.

Consider the case-histories of a few of the "Angry Young Men." John Wain's first book, *Hurry on Down*, received rave notices and sold extremely well (I'm not sure of the figures—probably between ten and twenty thousand, an excellent sale). Amis' *Lucky Jim* followed a few months later (in early 1954), and Walter Allen published his *New Statesman* review in which the two were linked as exponents of "the new hero." For the next eighteen months, Amis and Wain came in for a great deal of discussion in the posh weeklies, and both expressed themselves a great deal in reviews and articles. Amis insisted on remaining the slightly aloof "funny man," puzzled by his own success. Wain was less wise; his published opinions tended to be positive and pugnacious.

In the following year, both produced new novels. Amis' reviews were not bad: lukewarm but not hostile. But Wain's were murderous; *Living in the Present* came up once for air, and disappeared for good. The consequence was that Mr. Wain became even more irascible and pugnacious, and developed a complex about critics, his moods of Yeatsian disdain alternating with fits of virulent scorn. Who can blame him? Was it his fault that the critics in 1953 had not ceased to bleat about "the end of English literature," and that they fell on his novel with sobs of relief? And it was certainly not his fault that, by 1955, everyone was sick of the sound of his name and of chatter about the New Hero. I am not arguing that *Living in the Present* was a masterpiece that received unjust treatment; on the contrary, I tend to agree with those critics who believe that Wain has not yet proved he can write a novel. But Wain *is* a serious writer, and the spotlight treatment followed by a chorus of boos and cheers is not the best stimulus to serious writing.

Amis' luck has not been a great deal better, in spite of the relatively polite reception of his second novel. Its sales were probably less than a quarter of those of *Lucky Jim* (which ended by selling close on 50,000), and his third book, *I Like It Here*, received such hostile notices that its sales could hardly have reached ten thousand. As far as the booksellers are concerned, his sales show a steady decline, and Amis is still the author of *Lucky Jim* and nothing else. If, by some unlucky chance, his next novel is a complete misfire, Amis could be back pretty well where he started: a novelist without a guaranteed sale.

In a book on Puccini by Edward Greenfield I find this comment:

> Nothing shows more clearly the jealousy of success among Puccini's close contemporaries than the first performance of *Butterfly*.... There can be little doubt that the agitation was organised. Not only that. There is evidence that the organisation won sympathy from the ordinary public. They, too, were glad that Puccini had had a failure....

This was in 1904. But at least Puccini had behind him the success of *Manon Lescaut*, *La Bohème*, and *Tosca*. He also had the consolation of seeing *Butterfly* a tremendous success when it was produced two months later in Brescia. And his early success was *real* success; audiences really applauded *Bohème* and *Tosca*; he owed nothing to the *Observer* or the *Sunday Times*. So the anti-success mechanism didn't matter much after all. Wain and Amis have not that consolation.

Neither, of course, has Osborne. In this case, the rôle of the gossip columns and literary weeklies became more obvious. *Look Back in Anger* was virtually made by Kenneth Tynan's rave review in the *Observer*; the daily papers had treated it with complete indifference. But after Tynan, the rest of the posh weeklies hastened to follow suit. (Kenneth Allsop gives more detail of its reception in his *Angry Decade*.) It happened that Osborne's success came at the same time that Michael Hastings' play *Don't Destroy Me* was produced (he wrote it at 17, and was 19 when it was produced), and the week before my own book *The*

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Outsider came out. The *Daily Express* immediately asked myself, Hastings, and Osborne to contribute to a series of articles called "Angry Young Men," in which we were required to explain "what we were angry about." The craze was launched. The "new hero" of Amis and Wain had never got beyond the confines of the *New Statesman* and *Spectator*, but Osborne's Angry Young Man reached the *Daily Mirror* and the *Sunday Pictorial*.

When his second play, *The Entertainer*, was produced a year later, there was a general feeling of bewilderment. I went to the first night of the play to review it for *Reynolds News*. I was badly disappointed and bored; most of the critics I spoke to were bewildered by it. I got a feeling that some of them were wondering, "Is it really as bad as we think, or is there something wrong with us?" The next day, most of the dailies carried large pictures of Olivier dressed as Archie Rice. But the reviews confined themselves to the plot of the play, and such neutral comments as "Not very angry any more." No one quite seemed to know whether the play was a success or a failure. Finally, it was transferred to the West End, and the spectacle of Olivier dressed as a fourth-rate comedian continued to draw large audiences, rather as if one of those dubious Berlin nightclubs advertised Sir Winston Churchill wrestling in mud with Lady Astor. It ran. Pictures of Olivier as Archie Rice continued to appear in glossy magazines. Therefore, in some Pickwickian sense, it must be a success. But one perceptive critic wrote that Mr. Osborne should go on his knees and thank Olivier for making a very bad play seem to be a very good play.

Unfortunately, Osborne's third work, *The World of Paul Slickey*, was presented without the protection of Sir Laurence Olivier, or any other major name, and the result was inevitable; the jeers and catcalls are too recent to need recalling. Osborne was rash enough to state publicly that no English critic had the intellectual equipment to deal with his plays—a curious comment in view of his repeated declaration that his main aim is to make people feel—and the play was finally withdrawn after staggering along for a month with half-empty houses. It was the story of Wain's second novel repeated, but in front of a far bigger audience—the audience of the *Daily Mirror* and *Express* instead of the *Observer* and *New Statesman*, a multiplication by a thousand or so.

At least Osborne has one important consolation. The theatre is a world in which money can be made quickly and in fabulous quantities, and he has made it. He likes to quote Liberace's reply when someone asked if a particularly harsh criticism had upset him: "I cried all the way to the bank."

THE financial question is worth going into. In the year of *Look Back in Anger*, Osborne is reported to have made about £20,000. This means nothing; it is easy to spend that much money when you achieve success suddenly (as I discovered in the same year). But he has stayed in the high-income bracket ever since. Wain, on the other hand, admits that he makes very little money from his novels, and lives mainly by reviewing. Amis is a university lecturer, and apparently intends to remain one. If he gave it up, he would probably be forced to live off reviewing and journalism. Their immense success has not been a financial success, and they are rather in the position of a man with a title and no money to keep it up.

In the same way, John Braine's first novel, *Room at the Top*, sold forty thousand copies in its hard-cover edition. This large figure actually represents only about £5,000 in royalties. (Usual royalty terms on a book costing a pound are between two and three shillings per copy.) His immense sales in Penguins—around 500,000 copies—only represent a penny or so a copy. (I have not asked Mr. Braine any questions about his royalties, and am only quoting general figures.) The film-rights of the book were sold outright for a sum that the *Sunday Dispatch* quoted as £5,000, so that the author has gained no advantage from the film's extraordinary success. Since this sum (say, £12,000 in all) was made in one year, the income tax would divide it by about a half. From my own experience, nothing is easier than to spend a great deal more than £6,000 in one year when you make it quickly and make a sudden alteration in your way of life. So Mr. Braine's fabulous success is by no means a financial success, as far as this first novel goes.

But by the time this is printed, his second novel *The Vodi* should be published. Judging by the evidence of Wain, Amis, and Osborne, it seems likely that his reviews will be coloured by the anti-success feeling that made *Madame Butterfly* a fiasco. Even the general public seems to work up a kind of resentment about a man who is too continuously successful, and welcomes a flop. *If* Mr. Braine's novel met a recep-

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tion like that of Wain's second, the result would probably be financially very serious. (A novel's success, of course, depends largely on film-rights, serialisation rights, book-club rights, and various other factors apart from its hard-cover sale.) But could any reviewer who prepares to hatchet *The Vodi* lay his hand on his heart and swear that he is uninfluenced by the success of *Room at the Top* or what he has read about Mr. Braine in the *Sunday Express*?

I COULD labour this point a great deal longer, but a citation of my own experience might reinforce and clarify my argument.

I have always worked upon the assumption that I have something important to communicate. In my 'teens, most modern writers depressed me because their world was too dull, devoid of romantic idealism. I was also irritated by the kind of weakness and self-depreciation that led to the defeat of so many writers of the nineties—Dowson and Johnson, for example. In the writers I preferred, I found a lack of this crippling self-depreciation, a lack of neuroses. Dante, Goethe, Shakespeare, Nietzsche, Shaw, all worked with an *assumption* of genius, a tendency to take it for granted that they were the favourites of the gods. It seemed to me that the main difference between the great writers of the past and the defeated figures of our own time is not so much a difference of talent or genius, but the failure of modern writers *to make this assumption*: a lack of self-confidence.

In this spirit, I worked upon an assumption of my own genius, always bearing in mind the reservation that I might be mistaken. Keats' friend Haydon was mistaken; Blake's friend Fuseli was mistaken; the Victorian poets Alfred Austin and Lewis Morris, and Bailey (who wrote *Festus*) were mistaken. But better a thousand Haydons and Baileys who produce grandiose rubbish than one T. E. Lawrence or Van Gogh who died because they could never believe in their own genius. Thomas Mann expressed his admiration for the vast cyclic works of the 19th century, the *Comédie Humaine*, the *Rougon-Macquart*, the *Ring*, and quoted the chapter of Seville Cathedral, who said to the architect, "Build us such a cathedral that future generations will say the chapter must have been insane to undertake anything so immense."

When I was about nineteen, I got used to my manuscripts being returned promptly, and decided not to send them out again. I decided that if I had to wait until I was fifty before I published my first book, the intervening years might provide me with a vast amount to say. So many writers of my acquaintance let rejection discourage them and stopped making the effort. To me, this was stupidity; the effort and the genius were almost synonymous. So I wrote like mad, filling notebook after notebook, revising and re-revising my novel, cheering myself with the thought of Seville Cathedral.

The success came abruptly and shatteringly. Although I never doubted for a moment that it was my due, it unbalanced me. To begin with, I had regarded myself as the only real psychologist in European history since Nietzsche; but Nietzsche and the *Daily Express* made a disconcerting contrast.

I tried hard to communicate my ideas, and reporters—on the whole—tended to be sympathetic. But I soon saw that they tended to take a note of the surprising things I said, and then to quote them in isolation, to produce an effect of zany irresponsibility or outright insanity. To illustrate this, I have to look no further than last Monday's *Daily Mail*. I had spent a whole day with the reporter, who turned out to be exceptionally cultured and intelligent; we spent a day discussing Mahler, Bruckner, Wedekind, and Heinrich Mann. The article, when it appeared, took occasional sentences (which I certainly said) out of context, and made a most extraordinary farrago of them. I am quoted as saying that I intend to live to be 300; I actually stated that I admired Shaw's proposal in *Back to Methuselah*. I quote:

> I want to write the best book that has ever been written by a man of 80. I want to demonstrate the supremacy of the human spirit. Even if somebody were to drop the A-bomb, that still wouldn't stop me. I'd still believe in human progress. But I haven't the faintest intention of being killed by a bomb or run over by a car. I'm far too valuable. I'm quite certain I can reach the age of 110. Only the pointless are killed pointlessly. . . .

And so on. It would be futile to correct the occasional word that makes all the difference, to add the qualification, to point out that, at a certain juncture, the reporter interrupted to ask a question of his own, and mixed in his question with my reply.

A FEW months after *The Outsider* had been published, I noticed that the tone of my Press cuttings was changing; they were

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becoming noticeably unpleasant; in some cases, stupidly spiteful. I began to understand Wain's outbursts of baited fury about his critics; it was difficult to carry on working quietly with so much bitchery flying around. The reason, of course, was partly such articles as the one I have quoted above, and partly the ordinary anti-success mechanism. In fact, its success had been staggering. To begin with, it had sold as many copies in America as in England, (English best-sellers tend to be flops in America, and vice-versa) and quickly sold translation rights into a dozen languages. In England it sold forty thousand copies, at a guinea a copy. I accepted every offer to lecture, write articles, or appear on the radio or television. In some way that I still don't understand, I spent £2,000 in two months and had nothing to show for it except a few books and records.

The amount of enmity I aroused worried me. On the whole, I tend to like people; I have very seldom made enemies through personal contact, except by misunderstanding. I was often startled by the violence of the reactions I aroused. When I wrote an article denouncing D. H. Lawrence in *The Listener*, the editor received dozens of letters filled with rage and indignation. On another occasion, I turned up at the B.B.C. to take part in a recorded Third Programme discussion, and was immediately handed my postcard on which I had accepted the engagement; I had mentioned on the card that I was very busy; some B.B.C. official had scrawled on it, "It is very condescending of Mr. Wilson to come," and had made sure that the card was handed back to me. The discussion itself was a flop; I found that I disagreed with everyone else on the panel, and that they all seemed to take it personally. (They were mostly my own age, young men just down from the universities.) The discussion was never broadcast; probably the underlying animosity came over too clearly.

My first response to the slaughter of my next book was one of relief. I was sick of being a "public figure" and not recognising myself in the reactions I aroused. It was a sensation like being lifted from a high and dangerous pinnacle and replaced on the ground. By this time, I had moved out of London. I had given too many lectures, met too many people, attended too many parties, and I was tired. Cornwall was soothing. Only the weekly Press cuttings revived the sensation of being sniped at. And after *Religion and the Rebel* had been murdered by all the critics, the tone of the Press became imperceptibly kinder. At the P.E.N. Congress, Vera Brittain referred to me as "that unfortunate young man whose career has been laid in ruins," and Alec Waugh pointed out that writers aren't as delicate as all that, in spite of Keats and the *Quarterly*. On the whole, I felt a lot better. I'd returned to the kind of life I prefer: listening to records for hours of every day, buying all the books I wanted, and seeing very few people. I played darts in the local fishermen's pub to avoid visitors who might recognise me or budding writers who wanted advice, and made a point of avoiding any "intellectual" conversation, even with friends. I went to Norway, then to Hamburg, giving some lectures to university audiences, and was surprised that reporters asked me about my ideas and not about my private life. Bill Hopkins had also gone to Hamburg—partly, I think, as a result of the murderous reviews of his first novel. (His name had been a great deal associated with mine, and an article by him published in *Declaration* before his novel came out, may have hotted up the fire.) Stuart Holroyd had fled to Munich after his first book came out. It was strange to realise that success could be such an ordeal.

I WROTE my third critical book out of pure cussedness. It was intended as an anthology piece, to be published along with several other long essays. In writing it, I felt a perverse desire to provoke the people who had praised *The Outsider* and then attacked *Religion and the Rebel*, and to appear as a completely impenitent quoter of other writers. I had the consolation of knowing that it could never meet a worse reception than *Religion and the Rebel*. In any case, I had nothing to lose. Besides, I had finally brought my long novel about a sex maniac, *Ritual in the Dark*, near to completion. Since I began this at the age of nineteen, it had been through a great many metamorphoses, and Gollancz's had turned down an earlier version on the grounds that "no printer would dare to set it up." It seemed to me to express my feelings far better than the critical books. A clever critical book can impress with a façade of opinions, but a good novel can't be faked: it has no opinions. It can only show, with complete accuracy, what it is actually like *to be* the writer. So I wrote *The Age of Defeat* without many misgivings; nothing very bad could happen to it.

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And in fact, nothing very bad did happen to it. My publisher decided that it had better be published on its own; it was too long to be one-third of an anthology. And most of the reviews have lacked the maniacal fury I expected; many of them leaned over backwards to say something nice, even when the reviewer plainly disagreed with the book. Professor A. J. Ayer has not yet assailed it. (I attacked him in both my previous books, and he responded with shattering reviews of them both.) Philip Toynbee, who launched *The Outsider* with an enthusiastic review and then retracted it all when he reviewed *Religion and the Rebel*, has also ventured no opinion. And the comment that I most expected has not yet been made: that I stated that *Religion and the Rebel* would be my last critical book, and haven't kept my promise. Any reviewer would have been justified in demanding "When is he going to stop telling everybody how to write creative literature and produce some himself?" The query would have been relevant because it is the logical conclusion of my existentialism. Intellectual discussion becomes a bore; only some form of action can redeem the "existential thinker"; and the only form of action that is meaningful is creative. (For this reason I have always preferred music to literature, and would rather be a composer than a writer.)

WHEN I look back on the past three years, I haven't many regrets. Certainly the personal publicity was a mistake. It is always a mistake. Shaw is still largely unread because most people are more aware of the legendary Shaw created by the newspapers than of the man who wrote *Major Barbara*. J. B. Priestley's name is still a dirty word in the mouth of many intellectuals because they remember his broadcasts during the war and the "Jolly Jack" legends; his fine novels and penetrating criticisms are forgotten. Even T. S. Eliot's prestige has been sinking steadily since the widespread publicity given to his plays and to his second marriage. The anti-success mechanism begins to turn. And because each of his plays is received with funereal respect, there is a powerful but suppressed resistance to his ideas. He was better off as the violently-attacked author of *The Waste Land*.

But, the modern world being what it is, personal publicity is not always avoidable. In this case, there is only one antidote: to produce good work. The greatest danger for the writer is to cease to work. The only ultimately effective form of publicity is a body of major work. In so far as the modern literary climate distracts writers, or drugs them with immoderate praise or goads them with stupid blame, it is working towards the death of literature. In many ways, the writer was better off when he read his poetry to a clique, and was contented if he sold five hundred copies. It was easier to be subjective. But these are the conditions under which we must learn to work. Reviewers who detest the very idea of a writer getting involved in the publicity machine should realise that it *is* a machine, and that the writer *is* caught up in it. The writer may be too stupid or too naïve to realise quite what is happening, but to blame him for this is to expect him to possess something beside literary talent. And this is to cease to judge him purely as a writer. The main danger is that he should cease to work out of sheer disgust with the absurd see-saw of literary judgment and gossip-column broadsides.

It is true, of course, that this article contains a great deal of special pleading. After all, there must be thousands of authors in the British Isles who would be glad enough to see their work attract any kind of attention, adverse or otherwise. The "Angry Young Men" are lucky, and on the whole, I have been enviably lucky. I can at least write what I like. I haven't yet been forced to churn out books or articles simply to pay the rent, and I can reckon on a nucleus of serious readers who will continue to read me. I am not complaining, either for myself or on behalf of the "Angry Young Men." I am only trying to offer some first-hand material for a future "sociological and literary commentary" on the fifties. In fact, I have a great many reservations about the AYM's—myself among them. When I read that Shelley spent a great deal of his time and his slim allowance helping builders in Wales or lace workers in Marlow, I feel a certain amount of shame at my preference for spending my days listening to music and reading. Shelley's kind of "engagement" should be more widespread among writers; it is not enough to march to Aldermaston or parade in front of the houses of Parliament with an anti-H-bomb placard; the best occasions for commitment often provide no opportunity for exhibitionism. Many young writers need to become less aware of the Press, and more aware of human necessities. I include myself among them.

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Joseph Alsop

Some Thoughts on Co-Existence

THE machines that turn against the men who made them have been a familiar fictional nightmare since the story of Frankenstein and his monster was first published. So far, no one has lost any sleep over the possibility of whole nations suffering something like the fate of Frankenstein. Yet it seems to me increasingly urgent to ask ourselves a grave question with a strong Frankensteinish flavour:

Is not modern scientific and industrial progress beginning to impose severe handicaps on the Western nations, in the struggle for the world with the Soviet Union and its satellites?

To most Westerners, this will seem like asking whether we are not endangered by our greatest triumphs; and this is of course quite true. From the beginning in the 17th century to the present nuclear phase, the scientific-industrial revolution has always centred in the chief nations of the West. We owe to this fact the highest standard of living the world has ever seen; we also owe to this fact the lead in weapons development that the West rather easily maintained, until the Soviet Union, with painful efforts, opened a temporary missile gap only a year or so ago.

Yet if we really are endangered by our greatest triumphs, there is nothing especially surprising in this. History suggests, unhappily, that in the long run success can be almost as dangerous as failure. For proof of this disturbing rule, one need only look backwards in time, to our own civilisation's Greek beginnings.

IN BRIEF, as everyone knows, an extraordinary social and economic forward surge began in the little Greek city states at some time before the opening of the 7th century B.C.: Greek art and poetry and drama and philosophy were all by-products; there were substantial technological advances; and there were significant advances in military training, organisation, tactics, and weapon design. The 6th-century Athens of Peisistratos could not conceivably have fielded the armies or sent to sea the fleets that 5th-century Athens created and sustained during the Peloponnesian war. Most students date the Greek decline from this war, which no doubt caused the Greek advance to lose its glorious impetus. Yet even the Peloponnesian war, with all its cruel waste and loss, in no way imperilled the freedom of the Greeks.

The Greek states might (and did) ruin one another, but there was no serious external threat to their freedom, so long as the Greek soldiery remained the best in the world. Their unique quality was once again attested just after the long war ended. With only 10,000 hoplites hired among the Greek fighting men who were now at a loose end, Cyrus the Younger set out to seize the throne of Persia, an empire with armies numbering hundreds of thousands. Cyrus also had Persian supporters, but these were heavily outnumbered by the forces of his brother, King Artaxerxes. None the less Xenophon (a good general) records that Cyrus' few thousand Greeks had actually won his gamble for him, when Cyrus himself was untimely killed. A mere two decades later, however, when Xenophon in old age and in exile on his Spartan farm sat down to write about his Persian experience and the famous march to the sea, a great change was already on the way. By then Philip II of Macedon was already four years old, and Greece's freedom was beginning to be imperilled.

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The peril really dated, in fact, from the moment when the Greek social and economic advance and Greek military ideas and methods spilled over into relatively big, originally half-barbarian Macedon, and were there used by Philip II to make Macedon a new great power. In applying these Greek ideas and methods, Philip introduced few innovations. Even the special organisation of the Macedonian phalanx seems to have been much influenced by the innovations of Etanionondas. Generally speaking, however, almost everything important was borrowed from Greece. Macedon was also decidedly larger than any of the Greek states; as the Greek states could not or would not combine together, they were hopelessly outweighed by Macedon's new strength. Thus they became the playthings, first of Philip, then of Alexander the Great, and then of the grandiose Hellenistic monarchies that grew out of Alexander's empire. Finally Rome, still using the same foundations which the Greeks had laid, built the iron power that conquered the whole Mediterranean world. The last sad vestiges of Greece's freedom were extinguished in the Roman empire.

A NEARLY IDENTICAL PROCESS can be discerned, at almost the same time, in the history of the Far Eastern civilisation. The final victor in the Chinese power struggle was the big, originally half-barbarian border state of Ch'in; and Ch'in's career of conquest began in earnest after reforms carried out by the world's first Stalinist, the Lord Shang, who was Prime Minister of Ch'in in the mid-4th century B.C. But enough has been said about these grim episodes of the world past. One does not need any half-mystical theory of history, like Arnold Toynbee's, in order to explain them. Details may be arguable, but the broad outlines of the explanation are, it seems to me, almost mechanically practical and plain.

Certain kinds of development, capable of greatly increasing national power, first took place in groups of small states—in the West, in the Greek city states fringing the Aegean, and in the Far East, in the Chinese principalities and dukedoms of the middle Yellow River valley and the Shantung peninsula. The initial result was an impressive growth in wealth and strength of the originating states. Properly exploited, however, these new developments were capable of producing far greater national power than the small originating states could physically sustain. Therefore these states were doomed, as soon as the developments they had originated were fully shared by larger states that had the means to achieve more massive national power. Besides size, other factors, such as inefficient traditional habits, surely played their part. But the fact remains, that the states which had so triumphantly initiated such brilliant advances were not merely endangered; in the end, they were actually destroyed by their own triumphs.

AT LEAST the first stages of a nearly identical process can also be discerned in our own time. It explains the present world predominance of the U.S. and U.S.S.R., which was so starkly revealed when Eisenhower and Khrushchev arranged to meet, with no Europeans present at the council table, in order to discuss a grave crisis with its epicentre in the midst of Europe, at Berlin. At the beginning of the scientific-industrial revolution, the Western European nations had rôles comparable to the early rôles of the Greek city states or the old states of the Chinese heartland. In this phase, the result of the new advance was the rapid aggrandisement of Britain, France, and Germany. But the advance that so vastly aggrandised these nations also became too vast, in many different ways, for Britain, France, and Germany to exploit to the utmost. They ceased to be capable of extracting maximum national power from the scientific-industrial revolution, as it moved rapidly onwards. For this crude purpose, only America and Russia had the needed manpower, raw material sources and geographic space, combined with suitable although sharply different forms of social-political organisation.

Hence Washington and Moscow emerged, by the end of the Second World War, as the two giant powers towering over all the rest. In theory, they might have been preventively crushed before they became giants. But as this did not happen, the sheer bulk of America and Russia, together with their special capacity to share in the advance that had begun in Western Europe, were always bound to make these two the giant powers in the end. Russia's simple bulk, plus a social-political organisation that made it easy to maintain a disproportionate military establishment, even permitted the Soviet Union to attain giant-power status a few years before Russian technology was completely abreast of Western technology.

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I HASTEN TO NOTE that I am no believer in the reliability of historical analogies. It seems to me ridiculous to deny that historical processes with broadly similar causes often exhibit many other (and remarkably instructive) similarities. The study of similarities is scorned by the kind of historian who hopes to add to the sum of human knowledge by counting antique manhole covers; Thucydides and Ssu-ma Ch'ien, with less science but more intelligence, knew better. Analogies are unreliable, none the less, because historic processes are only broadly similar at best; there are always vital variations; similar processes can never be counted on to produce similar results. In the present instance, for example, one might perhaps foretell the same doom for the Western European nations that overtook the states of Greece and of old China, if the United States were an imperial nation with the same appetite for domination as the Soviet Union. But the U.S. is far from imperial; and for that very reason, the U.S. is just as dependent on the Western alliance as its trans-Atlantic partners. America and Western Europe will almost surely meet their fate together, whatever it may be. In the contest that will decide this fate, meanwhile, the rôle of the scientific-industrial revolution is just as decisive as ever, and perhaps even more so; but it has now been given a wholly new twist.

In the present phase, the factors that quite recently mattered so much, like national bulk, have ceased to count significantly. The two sides in the contest are now well-balanced, both in size and in technology. The balance may be upset later on, to be sure, if Communist China manages to become a third giant power; but in the present phase, what mainly counts is the relative efficiency of the American-Western European kind of society and of the Soviet kind of society, and particularly their relative aptitude for the all-important task of exploiting the remorseless, continuing scientific-industrial advance. Is our kind of society better equipped to use what we like to call progress, or is the other side's gain from progress far greater than our gain?

THE man who can make this calculation can probably prophesy the result of the cold war with reasonable assurance. But in attempting the calculation, we must first be careful to define the kind of "gain" we mean. If the test is betterment of the human condition, the Western gain from progress is no doubt greater; but as long as the whole world is locked in a harsh, unending power struggle, the test, alas, must be growth of national power.

In using this bleak test, we must remember that power is strictly comparative—Galahad's strength may have been the strength of ten, but it would have nothing against an opponent who had the strength of twenty We must also avoid becoming bemused by the visible miracles of the process we call progress. Each forward step may be dazzling in itself; sometimes we may be the first to make the step (although, beginning with the *sputnik*, the Soviets have too often been first). The miraculous character of the forward steps is unimportant; it is not even very important which side makes which step first, as long as the contestants stay roughly abreast. What is mainly important is whether the Soviet power-gain from these forward steps is greater than our power-gain. If the Soviet gain is greater, then these steps forward, however brilliant and pioneering, none the less amount in the end to heavy Western handicaps. Galahad, with his strength of ten, increases it by 50 per cent by special new means; but he still suffers a net competitive loss if the same new means increase the strength of his opponent by 100 per cent.

The "loss from progress" (for such is the ironic character of the West's danger) seems to me to extend far beyond the fairly simple sphere of comparative military power, as I shall try to suggest later on. But the loss from progress is a subtle and complex process in the political and economic spheres, whereas it is relatively easy to identify and prove in the military-strategic sphere. Let us begin, then, with the A.B.C.s of our problem; and let us first examine the effects of scientific-industrial progress on our kind of society's habitual way of winning wars, which proved so effective in the two world conflicts of this century.

AN interesting earlier form of the problem of different kinds of society crops up at this point. The Germanies of Wilhelm II and Adolf Hitler differed from one another as chalk from cheese; yet both Germanies were at least highly militarised societies. In contrast, the Western allies, despite their defence preparations, entered both wars as profoundly civilian societies. The pattern of both wars in turn largely derived from this contrast between the principal adversaries.

Being highly militarised, Germany both

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times declared war with a heavy superiority in force-in-being. Both times, Germany confidently expected this initial superiority to win a quick decision; both times, the German expectations came desperately close to being fulfilled; but both times, despite terrible reverses and fearful losses, France and Britain in the first war, and Britain alone in the second war, managed somehow to survive and fight on. Thereupon, another aspect of the different characters of the contending societies began to play its rôle. In essence, militarisation is pre-war mobilisation. Precisely because Germany was militarised already, the German human and economic reserves that could be mobilised in wartime were necessarily limited. The Western allies, being civilian, had much larger percentages of mobilisable reserves; and the United States, one must add, constituted the biggest reserve of all. These reserves were slowly mobilised—in other words, Germany's adversaries were gradually militarised—after the fighting started. By the time the mobilisation was complete, superiority in force-in-being had passed to the Western allies. On both occasions, as soon as this stage was reached, we won the war.

This was always a shockingly wasteful formula for victory; and in the age of the H-bomb, it is totally obsolete as well. Current Soviet military doctrine expensively pins its hopes on peacetime force-in-being so enormous and so widely dispersed that an impressive remnant can probably survive the first shock of an H-bomb exchange. "Both sides stand the first shock, and then we win because we have more left over," is the best way to summarise the Soviet theory. Meanwhile, there is no longer any coherent, agreed body of Western military doctrine, no doubt because ingrained habits are abandoned with difficulty, even when totally obsolete.

Some of our strategists, perhaps the majority, expect the first shock to decide the outcome of any World War of the future. But this assumption leads logically onwards to advocacy of the "pre-emptive strike" (a euphemism for preventive attack). The Soviet theorists also have much to say about the importance of the pre-emptive strike. It is certainly far easier to imagine the Soviet Union striking pre-emptively, than to imagine the U.S. or any other Western nation doing the same thing; easier, also, to imagine either of these things happening, than to imagine another victory won on the old formula, by mobilisation after the fighting has started. Despite the best will in the world to self-deception, no serious planner in the Pentagon now depends on wartime mobilisation to create superior strength out of inferior strength, after the devastation and dislocation of an opening exchange of H-bombs.

OBSERVE the extent of the handicap imposed by this strategic upset on the American-Western European kind of society! The Western nations are vastly richer than the Soviet bloc; they have far more of the reserve resources that used to be easy to mobilise in wartime but are difficult to tap in peacetime. But our kind of society has extreme difficulty in maintaining serious forces-in-being when there is no fighting going on, even in the midst of a relentless cold war. In contrast, the Soviet society has had no difficulty in maintaining the largest force-in-being the world has ever seen through all the cold war years—175 divisions in the Red Army alone, for instance, against 14 under-strength divisions in the U.S. Army at present. In sum, our special assets—rich reserves—have been depreciated in value almost to zero, while the special asset of the other side—easily maintained force-in-being—has been incalculably enhanced in value. All this is the quite direct result of the scientific-industrial advance which the West originated, from which the West still draws much self-confidence.

Nor is this all. While force-in-being's value has already been so much enhanced, the difficulty of maintaining serious force-in-being is also growing greater with each passing year. Again, the reason is the onward march of science and industry. In this connection, it is amusing (or appalling, or both) to look backwards. Nelson's flagship at the Battle of Trafalgar had seen action in great Chatham's wars. A decade later, when Napoleon was finally shipped off to Saint Helena, five senior British admirals were squabbling over the "Victory." Obsolescence, obviously, did not worry the five Admirals, and no wonder. The design of the British ship of the line, then the highest expression of the war-making art, had remained fundamentally unchanged for nearly a century-and-a-half, since Samuel Pepys served Charles II as Secretary of the Admiralty. In those days, in short, once you had bought and paid for force-in-being, you could at least count on its retaining its effectiveness for a very long period; nowadays, this is the height of folly.

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Nowadays you may spend billions on force-in-being in its existing highest form, as the U.S. has spent something like $100 billion on the Strategic Air Command since 1945. Then, just when you are most serenely sure of your own strength, the scientists briskly perfect another, even higher form of force-in-being, as they have now perfected the ballistic missile. At once, all your earlier expenditure is condemned to rapid obsolescence. Here again, we are confronted by a problem which is more easily solved by the Soviet kind of society than by our own. It is much harder for us than it is for them to pour unstinted sums into every sort of experimental weapons development that looks at all promising, and then to scrap and replace whole classes of weapons when any experiment pays off. In the Western nations, where civilian requirements have an unspoken first priority, the Treasuries and Budget Bureaus are constantly pointing out that "haste makes waste." But in experimental weapons development, unfortunately, only waste permits haste; great investments must be made in unproven projects, if you want to get there first. This is well understood in the Kremlin, where military priorities are never challenged and obsolete force-in-being is known to be a fraud.

These are the basic reasons why the Red Army has twice been completely re-equipped since 1945, while the Western armies are still using much equipment left over from World War II. These are also the basic reasons for the missile gap. The famous gap, it must be noted, is more than a mere isolated accident; it cannot just be blamed on individual fecklessness and cheeseparing. It is a result, in fact, of a deep difference in instinctive ways of doing business. As the scientific-industrial advance continues, other gaps will open later on, unless the Western way of doing business is sharply and quickly corrected.

In truth, the more one considers the effects on weaponry of the scientific-industrial advance, the more one remembers the warnings of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer in the celebrated American secret debate about making the H-bomb. We were the first to perfect this terrible weapon, this ultimate dire showpiece of progress. Most of us still think of the H-bomb as a source of Western strength, although the Soviet Union now has H-bombs in plenty and more ICBMs than the West as well. Yet the first requirement for the offensive use of H-bombs, by anyone but a madman, is the capacity to launch a surprise attack. The Soviets have this capacity. As for the West, President Eisenhower has gloomily said: "A free country is absolutely helpless when it comes to launching a surprise attack." General Curtis LeMay, a more modern soldier, is no doubt right in arguing that this is not true, providing a President understands that his constitutional power and duty to safeguard the United States from destruction necessarily transcends all other limitations, including even the theoretical limit on his war-making authority. Surprise can indeed be attained by our kind of society, if we are ready to pay for regular training schedules for the striking forces on the scale of the attack they may have to make. Still, it is obvious that surprise attack is far easier for the other side than for our side. If one side can easily use a weapon offensively, and the other side finds it hard to use the same weapon except defensively, then the weapon's existence is more advantageous to the contestant with greater offensive capability. Just these were the points that Dr. Oppenheimer had in mind, when he implored President Truman to remember that the H-bomb would strengthen our enemies more than it could strengthen us.

In other words, the Oppenheimer argument was only wrong in not being carried to its logical conclusion. For as soon as it was possible to build an H-bomb at all, there were only two alternative policies to choose between—if you excluded self-resignation to eventual surrender. One was to begin immediate preparations for a preventive war; and the other policy, which President Truman adopted, was to build the bomb and to rely thereafter on the strategy of deterrence.

Let me say at once that despite its weaknesses, I believe in deterrence. I do not think for one instant that the Soviets will knowingly risk another World War, unless continuing neglect of the Western deterrent permits the Kremlin to plan an H-bomb attack without serious fear of H-bomb retaliation. After having seen the Quemoy crisis on the spot, I also think that the deterrent strategy works rather better than most people suppose. The essence of the drama at Quemoy has not been widely grasped. It consisted of a local test of will with conventional weapons. This test was at first sharply restricted and then abruptly terminated by the fear of both sides that a bigger, longer, rougher test might lead finally to the use of nuclear weapons. This

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deterrent effect of keeping limited wars very limited indeed had not been predicted by the theorists. Yet the whole pattern of the fighting at Quemoy was controlled by the unengaged existence, thousands of miles from the scene of combat, of the nuclear deterrents of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

The weaknesses of a deterrent strategy do not arise, therefore, from the deterrent's failure to deter. The main weakness lies, rather, in the condemnation of our kind of society to a perpetually defensive posture. The reason, I am sure, is simply the general horror of the new weapons that industry and science have put in our hands. Otherwise, I can see no reason why the Western democracies should not be just as offensive-minded as they used to be—which was every bit as offensive-minded as anyone else, and in the 19th century, rather more so.

Certainly the West's failure to attempt even a modest political offensive at any point on the globe cannot be explained by lack of opportunity. One can imagine, not without goose-flesh, what the Soviets would do if any situation on our side of the line that divides the world, were even one-half as temptingly explosive as the situation in Eastern Europe. Twice in less than seven years, this situation in Eastern Europe has burst into open flame, in the Eastern German rising of June, 1953, and in the Hungarian rising of the autumn of 1956. On the first occasion, the U.S. still enjoyed an overwhelming superiority in nuclear striking power; and we also possessed the covert means to stimulate a wider rising in East Germany and provoke another rising in Czechoslovakia—a glittering opportunity, since there were no Russian occupation forces on Czech soil. On the second occasion, the Red Army crassly destroyed the legitimate government of a nation that had proclaimed its freedom in due form. On both occasions, too, the United States had an administration which had come to power with a pledge to "liberate" the peoples enchained by Communist imperialism. Yet the reaction to the East German rising was to use all our covert resources to help the Kremlin in getting the rising under control. Our reaction to the Hungarian tragedy was to gabble empty hypocrisies in the U.N.

In contrast, just within the last twelve months, the Soviet Union has approved and supported the test at Quemoy; has organised the pressure on Berlin; and has again approved and supported the new test in Laos. While our posture is strictly defensive, theirs is still decidedly offensive. In all these tests and probes, since the balance of power is the mainspring of world politics, the Soviets have been greatly helped by the deep changes in the balance of power that have been occurring for the reasons I have tried to sketch in the above. Yet I think the difference in our posture and theirs is almost more ominous than the shifting balance of power. If we must always defensively cower and be silent, while we all but grant the Kremlin a prescriptive right to test and probe and push and subvert on our side of the world-dividing line, I fear we must prepare to lose the whole world in the end.

I AM certainly not imagining the so-called "liberation" policy, which seems to me to have been an ugly fake. It could not have been proposed with honour, unless its proposers were prepared to militarise American society. We can only look to the deep, resistless forces of change that are so evidently at work inside the Soviet system, for the liberation of the peoples now imprisoned in the Soviet empire. We must also hope that these forces will end the cold war; but these are slow forces, incalculable in their operation. We can lose the cold war before these forces have their effect, unless the existing rules of the game are changed. Only one change is needed. Plainly, if we cannot interfere on the Soviet side of the line that divides the world, we must establish the stern rule that the Soviets cannot interfere at will on our side of the line. But it is equally plain that we can never make this essential alteration in the existing rules of the game, unless we recognise and overcome the novel, unseen handicaps I have tried to describe. The power balance must be righted before the rules of the game can be made equal.

In material terms, this is not yet an immensely difficult thing to do. Later on, perhaps, the continuing advance of industry and science will create problems that are almost beyond normal democratic solution. That is not true to-day. It is by no means necessary, for example, to balance, division for division, the gigantic force-in-being of the Soviet bloc. For adequate force-in-being, the West needs, first, a nuclear deterrent that the Kremlin *must* respect (and which should not be permitted to suffer from further gaps and lags). Next, the West needs NATO shield forces in a reasonable state of readiness. Since we are committed to fight a major war for Western Europe, these NATO shield

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forces may logically be equipped with the so-called "tactical" nuclear weapons. Finally, the West needs a modest component of fully ready and wholly conventionally armed forces. These are essential in order to reinforce the nuclear deterrent's limiting effect on local wars. The Kremlin's view of local tests and probes would be radically different, for instance, if the Kremlin knew the U.S. had five additional crack divisions, at full strength, in a high state of combat training, and capable of being airlifted to any front in the world on a day or hour's notice. There are other changes in the West's strategic design that ought to be considered. But in the year of the McElroy defence programme in the U.S., the Sandys defence programme in Britain, and the inconceivably futile French nuclear effort, the Western design can hardly be discussed dispassionately. In any case, my purpose is not to trace a new strategic design for the West; it is simply to show that the scientific-industrial advance, which we think of as our labour-saving friend, is in fact our effort-demanding enemy.

QUITE bearable efforts to maintain a reasonable balance of power; resoluteness in meeting all attempts to intervene on our side of the world-dividing line; an end to fraudulent threats to intervene on the other side of the line; and a constant readiness to respond generously but sensibly to any Kremlin initiative to reduce the cost and tension of the cold war—these are the vital ingredients of a solution of our military-strategic problem. This much, surely, we can achieve. If we achieve this much, the loss from progress in the military-strategic sphere will at least be rendered inconsiderable. And even although the moral handicap of our natural horror of the new weapon can never (should one say "Thank God"?) be altogether eliminated, we can still hope that the Soviet leaders will also adopt a defensive posture if they see the West doing what so obviously needs to be done.

Looking further ahead, however, I fear that stemming the Western loss progress may require much greater changes and adjustments than those I have briefly outlined above. The process I have tried to identify and describe in the military-strategic sphere is in fact at work in all spheres, conspicuously including the spheres of politics and economics. A geometrical increase of complexity and acceleration of tempo are the chief results of the continuing scientific-industrial advance. In the economic sphere, I suspect that this increase of complexity and acceleration of tempo are beginning to put a premium on state investment, which lessening the dependability of the Western method, still basic even in Britain, of a private investment. In the political sphere, the democratic process itself is being insidiously but demonstrably impaired, mainly because the major political positions are becoming too complex and remote from normal experience to be taken democratically, by the people. These are very grave and far-reaching problems, which need prolonged, careful, and cold-blooded thought by the ablest minds of the West.

We in the West have given almost no thought to these problems as yet, because history has inspired in us an ineffable complacency about the competitive superiority of our kind of society. Until very recently, our kind of society was indeed competitively superior, as the record shows. A Bismarck, or a Napoleon, might achieve brilliant temporary triumphs; but the opposition—what I have called the militarised societies—never had the staying power that our kind of society happily enjoyed. Now, however, a new kind of proposition confronts us, which appears to possess great staying power, plus a quite exceptional power to exploit the scientific-industrial advance to the utmost. The terms of the competition have altogether changed; and we too, I suspect, are going to have to change in many ways, if we are to meet this novel competition without suffering the final loss from progress—the loss of our own freedom.

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W. H. Auden

The Fallen City

Some Reflections on Shakespeare's "Henry IV"

IT HAS been observed that critics who write about Shakespeare reveal more about themselves than about Shakespeare, but perhaps that is the great value of drama of the Shakespearean kind, namely, that whatever he may see taking place on stage, its final effect upon each spectator is a self-revelation.

Shakespeare holds the position in our literature of Top Bard, but this deserved priority has one unfortunate consequence; we generally make our first acquaintance with his plays, not in the theatre, but in the classroom or study, so that, when we do attend a performance, we have lost that naïve openness to surprise which is the proper frame of mind in which to witness any drama. The experience of reading a play and the experience of watching it performed are never identical, but in the case of *Henry IV* the difference between the two is particularly great.

At a performance, my immediate reaction is to wonder what Falstaff is doing in this play at all. At the end of *Richard II*, we were told that the Heir Apparent has taken up with a dissolute crew of "unrestrained loose companions." What sort of bad company would one expect to find Prince Hal keeping when the curtain rises on *Henry IV*? Surely, one would expect to see him surrounded by daring, rather sinister, juvenile delinquents and beautiful gold-digging whores. But whom do we meet in the Boar's Head? A fat, cowardly tosspot, old enough to be his father, two down-at-heel hangers-on, a slatternly Hostess and only one whore, who is not in her earliest youth either; all of them seedy, and, by any worldly standards, including those of the criminal classes, all of them *failures*. Surely, one thinks, an Heir Apparent, sowing his wild oats, could have picked himself a more exciting crew than that. As the play proceeds, our surprise is replaced by another kind of puzzle, for the better we come to know Falstaff, the clearer it becomes that the world of historical reality which a Chronicle Play claims to imitate is not a world which he can inhabit.

If it really was Queen Elizabeth who demanded to see Falstaff in a comedy, then she showed herself a very perceptive critic. But even in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Falstaff has not and could not have found his true home because Shakespeare was only a poet. For that he was to wait nearly two hundred years till Verdi wrote his last opera. Falstaff is not the only case of a character whose true home is the world of music; others are Tristan, Isolde, and Don Giovanni.*

Though they each call for a different kind of music, Tristan, Don Giovanni, and Falstaff have certain traits in common. They do not belong to the temporal world of change. One cannot imagine any of them as babies, for a Tristan who is not in love, a Don Giovanni who has no name on his list, a Falstaff who is not old and fat, are inconceivable. When Falstaff says, "When I was about thy years, Hal, I was not an eagle's talent in the waist; I could have crept into an alderman's thumb-ring"—we take it as a typical Falstaffian fib, but we believe him when he says, "I was born about three in the afternoon, with a white head and something of a round belly."

Time, for Tristan, is a single moment stretched out tighter and tighter until it snaps. Time, for Don Giovanni, is an infinite arithmetical series of unrelated moments which has

* If Verdi's *Macbetto* fails to come off, the main reason is that the proper world for Macbeth is poetry not song; he won't go into notes.

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no beginning and would have no end if Heaven did not intervene and cut it short. For Falstaff, time does not exist, since he belongs to the *opera buffa* world of play and mock-action governed not by will or desire, but by innocent wish, a world where no one can suffer because everything they say and do is only a pretence.

Thus, while we must see Tristan die in Isolde's arms and we must see Don Giovanni sink into the earth, because being doomed to die and to go to hell are essential to their being, we cannot see Falstaff die on stage because, if we did, we should not believe it; we should know that, as at the battle of Shrewsbury, he was only shamming. I am not even quite sure that we believe it when we are told of his death in *Henry V*; I think we accept it, as we accept the death of Sherlock Holmes, as his creator's way of saying, "I am getting tired of this character"; we feel sure that, if the public pleads with him strongly enough, Shakespeare will find some way to bring him to life again. The only kind of funeral music we can associate with him is the mock-requiem in the last act of Verdi's opera.

Domine fallo casto.
Ma salvaggi l'addomine
Domine fallo guasto.
Ma salvaggi l'addomine.

There are at least two places in the play where the incongruity of the *opera buffa* world with the historical world is too much, even for Shakespeare, and a patently false note is struck. The first occurs when, on the battlefield of Shrewsbury, Falstaff thrusts his sword into Hotspur's corpse. Within his own world, Falstaff could stab a corpse because, there, all battles are mock battles, all corpses straw dummies; but we, the audience, are too conscious that this battle has been a real battle and that this corpse is the real dead body of a brave and noble young man. Pistol could do it, because Pistol is a contemptible character, but Falstaff cannot; that is to say, there is no way in which an actor can play the scene convincingly. So, too, with the surrender of Colevile to Falstaff in the Second Part. In his conversation, first with Colevile and then with Prince John, Falstaff talks exactly as we expect—to him, the whole business is a huge joke. But then he is present during a scene when we are shown that it is no joke at all. How is any actor to behave and speak his lines during the following?

LANCASTER—*Is thy name Colevile?*
COLEVILE—*It is, my lord.*
LANCASTER—*A famous rebel art thou, Colevile?*
FALSTAFF—*And a famous true subject took him.*
COLEVILE—*I am, my lord, but as my betters are,*
That led me hither. Had they been ruled by me,
You would have won them dearer than you have.
FALSTAFF—*I know not how they sold themselves: but thou, kind fellow, gavest thyself away gratis, and I thank thee, for thee.*
LANCASTER—*Now have you left pursuit?*
WESTMORELAND—*Retreat is made and execution stay'd.*
LANCASTER—*Send Colevile, with his confederates,*
To York, to present execution.

The Falstaffian frivolity and the headsman's axe cannot so directly confront each other.

READING *Henry IV*, we can easily give our full attention to the historical-political scenes, but, when watching a performance, attention is distracted by our eagerness to see Falstaff re-appear. Short of cutting him out of the play altogether, no producer can prevent him stealing the show. From an actor's point of view, the rôle of Falstaff has the enormous advantage that he has only to think of one thing —playing to an audience. Since he lives in an eternal present and the historical world does not exist for him, there is no difference for Falstaff between those on stage and those out front, and if the actor were to appear in one scene in Elizabethan costume and in the next in top-hat and morning-coat, no one would be bewildered. The speech of all the other characters is, like our own, conditioned by two factors, the external situation with its questions, answers, and commands, and the inner need of each character to disclose himself to others. But Falstaff's speech has only one cause, his absolute insistence, at every moment and at all costs, upon disclosing himself. Half his lines could be moved from one speech to another without our noticing, for nearly everything he says is a variant upon one theme—"I am that I am."

Moreover, Shakespeare has so written his part that it cannot be played unsympathetically. A good actor can make us admire Prince Hal, but he cannot hope to make us like him as much as even a second-rate actor will make us like Falstaff. Sober reflection in the study may tell us that Falstaff is not, after all, a very admirable person, but Falstaff on the stage gives us no time for sober reflection. When Hal or the Chief Justice or anybody else indicate that they are not bewitched by Falstaff, reason might tell us that they are in the right, but we ourselves are already bewitched, so that their disenchantment

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seems out of place, like the presence of teetotallers at a drunken party.

Suppose, then, that a producer were to cut the Falstaff scenes altogether, what would *Henry IV* become? The middle section of a political trilogy which could be entitled *Looking for the Doctor*.

The body politic of England catches an infection from its family physician. An able but unqualified practitioner throws him out of the sick-room and takes over. The patient's temperature continues to rise. But then, to everybody's amazement, the son of the unqualified practitioner whom, though he has taken his degree, everyone has hitherto believed to be a hopeless invalid, effects a cure. Not only is the patient restored to health but also, at the doctor's orders, takes another body politic, France, to wife.

The theme of this trilogy is, that is to say, the question: What combination of qualities is needed in the Ruler whose function is the establishment and maintenance of Temporal Justice? According to Shakespeare, the Ideal Ruler must satisfy five conditions. (1) He must know what is just and what is unjust. (2) He must himself be just. (3) He must be strong enough to compel those who would like to be unjust to behave justly. (4) He must have the capacity both by nature and by art of making others loyal to his person. (5) He must be the legitimate ruler, by whatever standard legitimacy is determined in the society to which he belongs.

Richard II fails to satisfy the first four of these. He does not know what Justice is, for he follows the advice of foolish flatterers. He is himself unjust, for he spends the money he obtains by taxing the Commons and fining the Nobility, not on defending England against her foes, but upon maintaining a lavish and frivolous court, so that, when he really does need money for a patriotic purpose, the war with Ireland, his Exchequer is empty and in desperation he commits a gross act of injustice by confiscating Bolingbroke's estates.

It would seem that at one time he had been popular but he has now lost his popularity, partly on account of his actions, but also because he lacks the art of winning hearts. According to his successor, he had made the mistake of being over-familiar—the ruler should not let himself be seen too often as "human"—and in addition, he is not by nature the athletic, physically brave warrior who is the type most admired by the feudal society he is called upon to rule.

In consequence, Richard II is a weak ruler who cannot keep the great nobles in order or even command the loyalty of his soldiers, and weakness in a ruler is the worst defect of all. A cruel, even an unjust king, who is strong, is preferable to the most saintly weakling because most men will behave unjustly if they discover that they can with impunity; tyranny, the injustice of one, is less unjust than anarchy, the injustice of many.

But there remains the fifth condition: whatever his defects, Richard II is the legitimate King of England. Since all men are mortal, and many men are ambitious, unless there is some impersonal principle by which, when the present ruler dies, the choice of his successor can be decided, there will be a risk of civil war in every generation. It is better to endure the injustice of the legitimate ruler, who will die anyway sooner or later, than allow a usurper to take his place by force.

As a potential ruler, Bolingbroke possesses many of the right qualities. He is a strong man, he knows how to make himself popular, and he would like to be just. We never hear, even from the rebels, of any specific actions of Henry IV which are unjust, only of suspicions which may be just or unjust. But in yielding to the temptation, when the opportunity unexpectedly offers itself, of deposing his lawful sovereign, he commits an act of injustice for which he and his kingdom have to pay a heavy price. Because of it, though he is strong enough to crush rebellion, he is not strong or popular enough to prevent rebellion breaking out.

Once Richard has been murdered, however, the rule of Henry IV is better than any alternative. Though, legally, Mortimer may have a good or better right to the throne, the scene at Bangor between Hotspur, Worcester, Mortimer, and Glendower, convinces us that Henry's victory is a victory for justice since we learn that the rebels have no concern for the interests of the Kingdom, only for their own. Their plan, if they succeed, is to carve up England into three petty states. Henry may wish that Hotspur, not Hal, were his heir, because Hotspur is a brave warrior ready to risk his life in battle against England's foes, while Hal appears to be dissipated and frivolous, but we know better. Hotspur is indeed brave, but that is all. A man who can say

> *I'll give thrice so much land*
> *To any well-deserving friend;*
> *But in the way of bargain, mark ye me,*
> *I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair*

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is clearly unfitted to be a ruler because his actions are based, not on justice but on personal whim. Moreover, he is not interested in political power; all he desires is military glory.

Thirdly, there is Prince Hal, Henry V to be. To everyone except himself, he seems at first to be another Richard, unjust, lacking in self-control but, unfortunately, the legitimate heir. By the time the curtain falls on *Henry V*, however, he is recognised by all to be the Ideal Ruler. Like his father in his youth, he is brave and personable. In addition, he is a much cleverer politician. While his father was an improviser, he is a master of the art of timing. His first soliloquy reveals him as a person who always sees several steps ahead and has the patience to wait, even though waiting means temporary misunderstanding and unpopularity, until the right moment for action comes; he will never, if he can help it, leave anything to chance. Last but not least, he is blessed by luck. His father had foreseen that internal dissension could only be cured if some common cause could be found which would unite all parties but he was too old and ill, the internal quarrels too violent. But when Hal succeeds as Henry V, most of his enemies are dead or powerless—Cambridge and Scroop have no armies at their back—and his possible right to the throne of France provides the common cause required to unite both the nobles and the commons, and gives him the opportunity, at Agincourt, to show his true mettle.

One of Falstaff's dramatic functions is to be the means by which Hal is revealed to be the Just Ruler, not the dissolute and frivolous young man everybody has thought him; but, so far as the audience is concerned, Falstaff has fulfilled this function by Act III, scene 2 of the First Part, when the King entrusts Hal with a military command. Up to this point the Falstaff scenes have kept us in suspense. In Act I, scene 2, we hear Hal promise

> *I'll so offend to make offence a skill,*
> *Redeeming time when men least think I will.*

But then we watch the rebellion being prepared while he does nothing but amuse himself with Falstaff, so that we are left wondering whether he meant what he said or was only play-acting. But from the moment he engages in the political action of the play, we have no doubts whatsoever as to his ambition, capacity, and ultimate triumph for, however often henceforward we may see him with Falstaff, it is never at a time when his advice and arms are needed by the State; he visits the Boar's Head in leisure hours when there is nothing serious for him to do.

For those in the play, the decisive moment of revelation is, of course, his first public act as Henry V, his rejection of Falstaff and company. For his subjects who have not, as we have, watched him with Falstaff, it is necessary to allay their fears that, though they already know him to be brave and capable, he may still be unjust and put his personal friendships before the impartial justice which it is his duty as king to maintain. But we, who have watched his private life, have no such fears. We have long known that his first soliloquy meant what it said, that he has never been under any illusions about Falstaff or anyone else and that when the right moment comes to reject Falstaff, that is to say, when such a rejection will make the maximum political effect, he will do so without hesitation. Even the magnanimity he shows in granting his old companion a life competence, which so impresses those about him, cannot impress us because, knowing Falstaff as they do not, we know what the effect on him of such a rejection must be, that his heart will be "fracted and corroborate" and no life competence can mend that. It is Hal's company he wants, not a pension from the Civil List.

The essential Falstaff is the Falstaff of *The Merry Wives* and Verdi's opera, the comic hero of the world of play, the unkillable self-sufficient immortal whose verdict on existence is

> *Tutto nel mondo è burla . . .*
> *Tutti gabbàti. Irridè*
> *L'un l'altro ogni mortal.*
> *Ma ride ben chi ride*
> *La risata final.*

In *Henry IV*, however, something has happened to this immortal which draws him out of his proper world into the historical world of suffering and death. He has become capable of serious emotion. He continues to employ the speech of his comic world:

> I have forsworn his company hourly any time this two-and-twenty years, and yet I am bewitched with the rogue's company. If the rascal have not given me medicines to make me love him, I'll be hanged. It could not be else. I have drunk medicines.

But the emotion so flippantly expressed could equally well be expressed thus.

> *If my dear love were but the child of state,*
> *It might for Fortune's bastard be unfathered,*

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As subject to Time's love or to Time's hate,
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gathered.
No, it was builded far from accident;
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls
Under the blow of thralled discontent,
Whereto th'inviting time and fashion calls.
It fears not Policy, that heretic
Which works on leases of short numbered hours,
But all alone stands hugely politic.

As the play proceeds, we become aware, behind all the fun, of something tragic. Falstaff loves Hal with an absolute devotion. "The lovely bully" is the son he has never had, the youth predestined to the success and worldly glory which he will never enjoy. He believes that his love is returned, that the Prince is indeed his other self, so he is happy, despite old age and poverty. We, however, can see that he is living in a fool's paradise, for the Prince cares no more for him as a person than he would care for the King's Jester. He finds Falstaff amusing but no more. If we could warn Falstaff of what he is too blind to see, we might well say: Beware, before it is too late, of becoming involved with one of those mortals

That do not do the thing they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone....

Falstaff's story, in fact, is not unlike one of those folk tales in which a mermaid falls in love with a mortal prince: the price she pays for her infatuation is the loss of her immortality without the compensation of temporal happiness.

LET US now suppose, not only that Falstaff takes no part in the play, but is also allowed to sit in the audience as a spectator. How much will he understand of what he sees going on?

He will see a number of Englishmen divided into two parties who finally come to blows. That they should come to blows will in itself be no proof to him that they are enemies because they might, like boxers, have agreed to fight for fun. In Falstaff's world there are two causes of friendship and enmity. My friend may be someone whose appearance and manner I like at this moment, my enemy someone whose appearance and manners I dislike. Thus, he will understand Hotspur's objection to Bolingbroke perfectly well.

Why, what a candy deal of courtesy
This fawning greyhound then did proffer me.
Look, when his infant fortune came of age,
And "gentle Harry Percy" and "kind cousin."
O the devil take such cozeners.

To Falstaff, "my friend" can also mean he whose wish at this moment coincides with mine, "my enemy" he whose wish contradicts mine. He will see the civil war, therefore, as a clash between Henry and Mortimer who both wish to wear the crown. What will perplex him is any argument as to who has the better right to wear it.

Anger and fear he can understand, because they are immediate emotions, but not nursing a grievance or planning revenge or apprehension, for these presuppose that the future inherits from the past. He will not, therefore, be able to make head or tail of Warwick's speech "There is a history in all men's lives . . ." nor any reasons the rebels give for their actions which are based upon anything Bolingbroke did before he became king, nor the reason given by Worcester for concealing the king's peace offer from Hotspur.

It is impossible, it cannot be
The King should keep his word in loving us.
He will suspect us still and find a time
To punish this offence in other faults.

To *keep his word* is a phrase outside Falstaff's comprehension, for a promise means that at some future moment I might have to refuse to do what I wish, and, in Falstaff's world to wish and to do are synonymous. For the same reason, when, by promising them redress, Prince John tricks the rebels into disbanding their armies and then arrests them, Falstaff will not understand why they and all the audience except himself are shocked.

The first words Shakespeare puts into Falstaff's mouth are "Now Hal, what time of day is it, lad?" to which the Prince quite rightly replies, "What the devil hast thou to do with the time of day?" In Falstaff's world, every moment is one of infinite possibility when anything can be wished. As a spectator, he will keep hearing the characters use the words *time* and *occasion* in a sense which will stump him.

What I know
Is ruminated, plotted, and set down
And only stays but to behold the face
Of that occasion that shall bring it on.

The purpose you undertake is dangerous, the time itself unsorted....

...I will resolve to Scotland. There am I
Till time and vantage crave my company.

Of all the characters in the play, the one he will think he understands best is the least

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Falstaff-like of them all, Hotspur, for Hotspur, like himself, appears to obey the impulse of the moment and say exactly what he thinks without prudent calculation. Both conceal nothing from others, Falstaff because he has no mask to put on, Hotspur because he has so become his mask that he has no face beneath it. Falstaff says, as it were, "I am I. Whatever I do, however outrageous, is of infinite importance because I do it." Hotspur says: "I am Hotspur, the fearless, the honest, plain-spoken warrior. If I should ever show fear or tell lies, even white ones, I should cease to exist." If Falstaff belonged to the same world as Hotspur, one could call him a liar, but, in his own eyes, he is perfectly truthful, for, to him, fact is subjective fact, "what I am actually feeling and thinking at this moment." To call him a liar is as ridiculous as if, in a play, a character should say "I am Napoleon," and a member of the audience should cry, "You're not. You're Sir John Gielgud."

In Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, there is a remarkable scene in which Peer visits the Troll King. At the entertainment given in his honour, animals dance to hideous noises, but Peer behaves to them with perfect manners as if they were beautiful girls and the music ravishing. After it is over, the Troll King asks him: "Now, frankly, tell me what you saw." Peer replies: "What I saw was impossibly ugly"—and then describes the scene as the audience have seen it. The Troll King who has taken a fancy to him, suggests that Peer would be happier as a troll. All that is needed is a little eye-operation, after which he will really see a cow as a beautiful girl. Peer indignantly refuses. He is perfectly willing, he says, to swear that a cow is a girl, but to surrender his humanity so that he can no longer lie, because he cannot distinguish between fact and fiction, that he will never do. By this criterion, neither Falstaff nor Hotspur is quite human, Falstaff because he is a pure troll, Hotspur because he is so lacking in imagination that the troll kingdom is invisible to him.

At first, then, Falstaff will believe that Hotspur is one of his own kind, who like himself enjoys putting on an act, but then he will hear Hotspur say words which he cannot comprehend.

> *. . . time serves wherein you may redeem*
> *Your banished honours and restore yourselves*
> *Into the good thoughts of the world again.*

In Falstaff's world, the only value standard is importance, that is to say, all he demands from others is attention, all he fears is being ignored. Whether others applaud or hiss does not matter; what matters is the volume of the hissing or the applause.

Hence, in his soliloquy about honour, his reasoning runs something like this: if the consequences of demanding moral approval from others is dying, it is better to win their disapproval; a dead man has no audience.

Since the Prince is a personal friend, Falstaff is, of course, a King's man who thinks it a shame to be on any side but one, but his loyalty is like that of those who, out of local pride, support one football team rather than another. As a member of the audience, his final comment upon the political action of the play will be the same as he makes from behind the footlights.

> Well, God be thanked for these rebels: they offend none but the virtuous. A young knave and begging. Is there not employment? Doth not the King lack subjects. Do not the rebels need soldiers?

ONCE upon a time we were all Falstaffs: then we became social beings with superegos. Most of us learn to accept this, but there are some in whom the nostalgia for the state of innocent self-importance is so strong that they refuse to accept adult life and responsibilities and seek some means to become again the Falstaffs they once were. The commonest technique adopted is the bottle and, curiously enough, the male drinker reveals his intention by developing a drinker's belly.

If one visits a bathing beach, one can observe that men and women grow fat in different ways. A fat woman exaggerates her femininity; her breasts and buttocks enlarge till she comes to look like the Venus of Wilmersdorf. A fat man, on the other hand, looks like a cross between a very young child and a pregnant mother. There have been cultures in which obesity in women was considered the ideal of sexual attraction, but in no culture, so far as I know, has a fat man been considered more attractive than a thin one. If my own weight and experience gives me any authority, I would say that fatness in the male is the physical expression of a psychological wish to withdraw from sexual competition and, by combining mother and child in his own person, to become emotionally self-sufficient. The Greeks thought of Narcissus as a slender youth but I think they were wrong. I see him as a middle-aged man with a corporation, for, however

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ashamed he may be of displaying it in public, in private a man with a belly loves it dearly: it may be an unprepossessing child to look at, but he has borne it all by himself.

> I do walk here before thee like a sow that hath overwhelmed all her litter but one. . . .

> I have a whole school of tongues in this belly of mine, and not a tongue of them all speaks any other word but my name. My womb, my womb undoes me.

Not all fat men are heavy drinkers, but all males who drink heavily become fat.* At the same time, the more they drink, the less they eat. "O monstrous! But one halfpenny worth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack!" exclaims Hal on looking at Falstaff's bill, but he cannot have expected anything else. Drunkards die, not from the liquid alcohol they take so much of, but from their refusal to eat solid food, and anyone who has had to look after a drunkard knows that the only way to get enough nourishment into him is to give him liquid or mashed-up foods, for he will reject any dish that needs chewing. Solid food is to the drunkard a symbolic reminder of the loss of the mother's breast and his ejection from Eden.

> A plague on sighing and grief. It blows a man up like a bladder. . . .

So Falstaff, and popular idiom identifies the kind of griefs which have this fattening effect—eating humble pie, swallowing insults, etc.

In a recent number of *The Paris Review*, Mr. Nicholas Tucci writes:

> The death song of the drunkard—it may go on for thirty years—goes more or less like this. "I who was born a god, with the whole world in reach of my hands, lie now defeated in the gutter. Come and listen: hear what the world has done to me."
>
> *In Vino Veritas* is an old saying that has nothing to do with the drunkard's own truth. He has no secrets—that is true—but it is not true that his truth may be found under the skin of his moral reserve or of his sober lies, so that the moment he begins to cross his eyes and pour out his heart, anyone may come in and get his fill of truth. What happens is exactly the opposite. When the drunkard confesses, he makes a careful choice of his pet sins: and these are non-existent. He may be unable to distinguish a person from a chair, but never an unprofitable lie from a profitable one. How could he see himself as a very insignificant entity in a huge world of others, when he sees nothing but himself spread over the whole universe. "I am alone" is indeed a true cry, but it should not be taken literally.

The drunk is unlovely to look at, intolerable to listen to, and his self-pity is contemptible. Nevertheless, as not merely a worldly failure but also a wilful failure, he is a disturbing image for the sober citizen. His refusal to accept the realities of this world, babyish as it may be, compels us to take another look at this world and reflect upon our motives for accepting it. The drunkard's suffering may be self-inflicted, but it is real suffering and reminds us of all the suffering in this world which we prefer not to think about because, from the moment we accepted this world, we acquired our share of responsibility for everything that happens in it.

When we see Falstaff's gross paunch and red face, we are reminded that the body politic of England is not so healthy either.

> *The Commonwealth is sick of its own choice.*
> *Their over-greedy love hath surfeited . . .*
> *Thou (beastly feeder) are so full of him*
> *That thou provokest thyself to cast him up.*
> *So, so, thou common dog, didst thou disgorge*
> *Thy glutton bosom of the royal Richard. . . .*
>
> *Then you perceive the body of our kingdom,*
> *How foul it is: what rank diseases grow,*
> *And with what danger near the heart of it.*

It might be expected that we would be revolted at the sight and turn our eyes with relief and admiration to the Hero Prince. But in fact we aren't and we don't. Whenever Falstaff is on stage, we have no eyes for Hal. If Shakespeare did originally write a part for Falstaff in *Henry V*, it would not have taken pressure from the Cobhams to make him cut it out; his own dramatic instinct would have told him that, if Henry was to be shown in his full glory, the presence of Falstaff would diminish it.

SEEKING for an explanation of why Falstaff affects us as he does, I find myself compelled to see *Henry IV* as possessing, in addition to its overt meaning, a parabolic significance. Overtly, Falstaff is a Lord of Misrule; parabolically, he is a comic symbol for the supernatural order of charity as contrasted with the temporal order of Justice symbolised by Henry of Monmouth.

Such readings are only possible with drama which, like Shakespeare's, is secular, concerned

* All the women I have met who drank heavily were lighter and thinner than average.

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directly, not with the relation of man and God, but with the relations between men. Greek Tragedy, at least before Euripides, is directly religious, concerned with what the gods do to men rather than with what men do to each other: it presents a picture of human events, the causes of which are divine actions. In consequence a Greek tragedy does not demand that we "read" it in the sense that we speak of "reading" a face. The ways of the gods may be mysterious to human beings but they are not ambiguous.

There can be no secular drama of any depth or importance except in a culture which recognises that man has an internal history as well as an external; that his actions are partly in response to an objective situation created by his past acts and the acts of others, and partly initiated by his subjective need to re-create, re-define, and re-choose himself. Surprise and revelation are the essence of drama. In Greek tragedy these are supplied by the gods; no mortal can foresee how and when they will act. But the conduct of men has no element of surprise, that is to say, the way in which they react to the surprising events which befall them is exactly what one would expect.

A secular drama presupposes that in all which men say and do there is a gratuitous element which makes their conduct ambiguous and unpredictable. Secular drama, therefore, demands a much more active rôle from its audience than a Greek tragedy. The audience has to be at one and the same time a witness to what is occurring on stage and a subjective participant who interprets what he sees and hears. And a secular dramatist like Shakespeare who attempts to project the inner history of human beings into objective stage action is faced with problems which Aeschylus and Sophocles were spared, for there are aspects of this inner history which resist and sometimes defy manifestation.

> Humility is represented with difficulty—when it is shown in its ideal moment, the beholder senses the lack of something because he feels that its true ideality does not consist in the fact that it is ideal in the moment but that it is constant. Romantic love can very well be represented in the moment, but conjugal love cannot, because an ideal husband is not one who is such once in his life but one who every day is such. Courage can very well be concentrated in the moment, but not patience, precisely for the reason that patience strives with time. A king who conquers kingdoms can be represented in the moment, but a cross bearer who every day takes up his cross cannot be represented in art because the point is that he does it every day. (*Kierkegaard*)

Let us suppose, then, that a dramatist wishes to show a character acting out of the spirit of charity or *agape*. At first this looks easy. *Agape* requires that we love our enemies, do good to those that hate us and forgive those who injure us, and this command is unconditional. Surely, all a dramatist has to do is to show one human being forgiving an enemy.

In *Measure for Measure*, Angelo has wronged Isabella and Mariana, and the facts of the wrong become public. Angelo repents and demands that the just sentence of death be passed on him by the Duke. Isabella and Mariana implore the Duke to show mercy. The Duke yields to their prayers and all ends happily. I agree with Professor Coghill's interpretation of *Measure for Measure* as a parable in which Isabella is an image for the redeemed Christian Soul, perfectly chaste and loving, whose reward is to become the bride of God; but, to my mind, the parable does not quite work because it is impossible to distinguish in dramatic action between the spirit of forgiveness and the act of pardon.

The command to forgive is unconditional: whether my enemy harden his heart or repent and beg forgiveness is irrelevant. If he hardens his heart, he does not care whether I forgive him or not and it would be impertinent of me to say "I forgive you." If he repents and asks, "Will you forgive me?" the answer "Yes" should not express a decision on my part but describe a state of feeling which has always existed. On the stage, however, it is impossible to show one person forgiving another, unless the wrongdoer ask for forgiveness, because silence and inaction are undramatic. The Isabella we are shown in earlier scenes of *Measure for Measure* is certainly not in a forgiving spirit—she is in a passion of rage and despair at Angelo's injustice —and dramatically she could not be otherwise, for then there would be no play. Again, on the stage, forgiveness requires manifestation in action, that is to say, the one who forgives must be in a position to do something for the other which, if he were not forgiving, he would not do. This means that my enemy must be at my mercy; but, to the spirit of charity, it is irrelevant whether I am at my enemy's mercy or he at mine. So long as he is at my mercy, forgiveness is indistinguishable from judicial pardon.

The law cannot forgive, for the law has not

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been wronged, only broken; only persons can be wronged. The law can pardon, but it can only pardon what it has the power to punish. If the law-breaker is stronger than the legal authorities, they are powerless to do either. The decision to grant or refuse pardon must be governed by prudent calculation—if the wrongdoer is pardoned, he will behave better in the future than if he were punished, etc. But charity is forbidden to calculate in this way: I am required to forgive my enemy whatever the effect on him may be.

One may say that Isabella forgives Angelo and the Duke pardons him. But, on the stage, this distinction is invisible because, there, power, justice, and love are all on the same side. Justice is able to pardon what love is commanded to forgive. But to love, it is an accident that the power of temporal justice should be on its side; indeed, the Gospels assure us that, sooner or later, they will find themselves in opposition and that love must suffer at the hands of justice.

In *King Lear*, Shakespeare attempts to show absolute love and goodness, in the person of Cordelia, destroyed by the powers of this world, but the price he pays is that Cordelia, as a dramatic character, is a bore.

If she is not to be a fake, what she says cannot be poetically very impressive nor what she does dramatically very exciting.

What shall Cordelia speak? Love and be silent.

In a play with twenty-six scenes, Shakespeare allows her to appear in only four, and from a total of over three thousand three hundred lines, he allots to her less than ninety.

TEMPORAL Justice demands the use of power to quell the unjust; it demands prudence, a practical reckoning with time and place; and it demands publicity for its laws and its penalties. But Charity forbids all three—we are not to resist evil, if a man demand our coat we are to give him our cloak also, we are to take no thought for the morrow and, while secretly fasting and giving alms, we are to appear in public as persons who do neither.

A direct manifestation of charity in secular terms is, therefore, impossible. One form of indirect manifestation employed by religious teachers has been through parables in which actions which are ethically immoral are made to stand as a sign for that which transcends ethics. The Gospel parable of the Unjust Steward is one example. These words by a Hassidic Rabbi are another:

> I cannot teach you the ten principles of service but a little child and a thief can show you what they are. From the child you can learn three things:
> He is merry for no particular reason.
> Never for a moment is he idle.
> When he wants something, he demands it vigorously.
> The thief can instruct you in many things:
> He does his service by night.
> If he does not finish what he has set out to do in one night, he devotes the next night to it.
> He and all those who work for him, love one another.
> He risks his life for slight gains.
> What he takes has so little value for him that he gives up for a very small coin.
> He endures blows and hardships and it matters nothing to him.
> He likes his trade and would not exchange it for any other.

If a parable of this kind is dramatised, the action must be comic, that is to say, the apparently immoral actions of the hero must not inflict, as in the actual world they would, real suffering upon others.

Thus, Falstaff speaks of himself as if he were always robbing travellers. We see him do this once—incidentally, it is not Falstaff but the Prince who is the instigator—and the sight convinces us that he never has been and never could be a successful highwayman. The money is re-stolen from him and returned to its proper owners; the only sufferer is Falstaff himself who has been made a fool of. He lives shamelessly on credit, but none of his creditors seems to be in serious trouble as a result. The Hostess may swear that if he does not pay his bill, she will have to pawn her plate and tapestries, but that is shown to be the kind of exaggeration habitual to landladies, for in the next scene they are still there. What, overtly, is dishonesty becomes, parabolically, a sign for a lack of pride, humility which acknowledges its unimportance and dependence upon others.

Then he rejoices in his reputation as a fornicator with whom no woman is safe alone, but the Falstaff on stage is too old to fornicate, and it is impossible to imagine him younger. All we see him do is defend a whore against a bully, set her on his knee and make her cry out of affection and pity. What in the real world is promiscuous lust, the treatment of other persons as objects of sexual greed, becomes in the comic

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world of play a symbol for the charity that loves all neighbours without distinction.

Living off other people's money and indiscriminate fornication are acts of injustice towards private individuals; Falstaff is also guilty of injustice to others in their public character as citizens. In any war it is not the justice or injustice of either side that decides who is to be the victor but the power each can command. It is therefore the duty of all who believe in the justice of the King's side to supply him with the best soldiers possible. Falstaff makes no attempt to fulfil this duty. Before the battle of Shrewsbury, he first conscripts those who have most money and least will to fight and then allows them to buy their way out, so that he is finally left with a sorry regiment of "discarded unjust serving men, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters and ostlers trade fallen...." Before the battle of Gaultree Forest, the two most sturdy young men, Mouldy and Bullcalf, offer him money and are let off, and the weakest, Shadow, Feeble, and Wart, taken.

From the point of view of society this is unjust, but if the villagers who are subject to conscription were to be asked, as private individuals, whether they would rather be treated justly or as Falstaff treats them, there is no doubt as to their answer. What their betters call just and unjust means nothing to them; all they know is that conscription will tear them away from their homes and livelihoods with a good chance of getting killed or returning maimed "to beg at the town's end." Those whom Falstaff selects are those with least to lose, derelicts without home or livelihood to whom soldiering at least offers a chance of loot. Bullcalf wants to stay with his friends, Mouldy has an old mother to look after, but Feeble is quite ready to go if his friend Wart can go with him.

Falstaff's neglect of the public interest in favour of private concerns is an image for the justice of charity which treats each person, not as a cypher, but as a unique person. The Prince may justly complain:

> I never did see such pitiful rascals.

but Falstaff's retort speaks for all the insulted and injured of this world:

> Tut tut—good enough to toss, food for powder, food for powder.
> They'll fill a pit as well as better. Tush, man, mortal men, mortal men....

These are Falstaff's only acts: for the rest, he fritters away his time, swigging at the bottle and taking no thought for the morrow. As parable, both the idleness and the drinking, the surrender to immediacy and the refusal to accept reality, become signs for the Unworldly Man as contrasted with Prince Hal who represents worldliness at its best.

At his best, the worldly man is one who dedicates his life to some public end, politics, science, industry, art, etc. The end is outside himself, but the choice of end is determined by the particular talents with which nature has endowed him, and the proof that he has chosen rightly is worldly success. To dedicate one's life to an end for which one is not endowed is madness, the madness of Don Quixote. Strictly speaking, he does not desire fame for himself, but to achieve something which merits fame. Because his end is worldly, that is, in the public domain—to marry the girl of one's choice, or to become a good parent, are private, not worldly, ends—the personal life and its satisfactions are, for the worldly man, of secondary importance, and should they ever conflict with his vocation, must be sacrificed. The worldly man at his best knows that other persons exist and desires that they should—a statesman has no wish to establish justice among tables and chairs—but if it is necessary to the achievement of his end to treat certain persons as if they were things, then, callously or regretfully, he will. What distinguishes him from the ordinary criminal is that the criminal lacks the imagination to conceive of others as being persons like himself; when he sacrifices others, he feels no guilt because, to the criminal, he is the only person in a world of things. What distinguishes both the worldly man and the criminal from the wicked man is their lack of malice. The wicked man is not worldly but anti-worldly. His conscious end is nothing less than the destruction of others. He is obsessed by hatred at his knowledge that other persons exist beside himself and cannot rest until he has reduced them all to the status of things.

But it is not always easy to distinguish the worldly man from the criminal or the wicked man by observing their behaviour and its results. It can happen, for instance, that, despite his intention, a wicked man does good. Don John in *Much Ado About Nothing* certainly means nothing but harm to Claudio and Hero, yet it is thanks to him that Claudio obtains insight into his own shortcomings and becomes, what previously he was not, a fit husband for

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Hero. To the outward eye, however different their subjective intentions, both Harry of Monmouth and Iago deceive and destroy. Even in their speech one cannot help noticing a certain resemblance between

So when this loose behaviour I throw off
And pay the debt I never promised,
By how much better than my word I am.
I'll so offend to make offence a skill
Redeeming time when men least think I will.

and:

For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at. I am not what I am....

and the contrast of both to Sonnet 121:

No, I am that I am and those that level
At my abuses reckon up their own.
I may be straight though they themselves are bevel.

Falstaff is perfectly willing to tell the world: "I am that I am, a drunken old failure." Hal cannot jeopardise his career by such careless disclosure but must always assume whatever manner is politic at the moment. To the degree that we have worldly ambitions, Falstaff's verdict on the Prince strikes home.

Thou art essentially mad without seeming so.

FALSTAFF never really does anything, but he never stops talking, so that the impression he makes on the audience is not of idleness but of infinite energy. He is never tired, never bored, and until he is rejected he radiates happiness as Hal radiates power, and this happiness without apparent cause, this untiring devotion to making others laugh becomes a comic image for a love which is absolutely self-giving.

Laughing and loving have certain properties in common. Laughter is contagious but not, like physical force, irresistible. A man in a passion of any kind cannot be made to laugh; if he laughs, it is a proof that he has already mastered his passion. Laughter is an action only in a special sense. Many kinds of action can cause laughter, but the only kind of action that laughter causes is more laughter; while we laugh, time stops and no other kind of action can be contemplated. In rage or hysteria people sometimes are said to "laugh" but no one can confuse the noises they make with the sound of real laughter. Real laughter is absolutely unaggressive; we cannot wish people or things we find amusing to be other than they are; we do not desire to change them, far less hurt or destroy them. An angry and dangerous mob is rendered harmless by the orator who can succeed in making it laugh. Real laughter is always, as we say, "disarming."

Falstaff makes the same impression on us that the Sinner of Lublin made upon his rabbi.

> In Lublin lived a great sinner. Whenever he went to talk to the rabbi, the rabbi readily consented and conversed with him as if he were a man of integrity and one who was a close friend. Many of the hassidim were annoyed at this and one said to the other: "Is it possible that our rabbi who has only to look once into a man's face to know his life from first to last, to know the very origin of his soul, does not see that this fellow is a sinner? And if he does see it, that he considers him worthy to speak to and associate with." Finally they summoned up courage to go to the rabbi himself with their question. He answered them: "I know all about him as well as you. But you know how I love gaiety and hate dejection. And this man is so great a sinner. Others repent the moment they have sinned, are sorry for a moment, and then return to their folly. But he knows no regrets and no doldrums, and lives in his happiness as in a tower. And it is the radiance of his happiness that overwhelms my heart."

Falstaff's happiness is almost an impregnable tower, but not quite. "I am that I am" is not a complete self-description; he must also add—"The young prince hath misled me. I am the fellow with the great belly, and he is my dog."

The Christian God is not a self-sufficient being like Aristotle's First Cause, but a God who creates a world which he continues to love although it refuses to love him in return. He appears in this world, not as Apollo or Aphrodite might appear, disguised as a man so that no mortal should recognise his divinity, but as a real man who openly claims to be God. And the consequence is inevitable. The highest religious and temporal authorities condemn Him as a blasphemer and a Lord of Misrule, as a Bad Companion for mankind. Inevitable because, as Richelieu said, "the salvation of States is in this world," and history has not as yet provided us with any evidence that the Prince of this world has changed his character.

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Brewster Ghiselin

Pursuits of a Chimera

(*Homocanis concolor*)

Hounds are scraping the dark with hoarse nightbarking,
Clawing our sleep as if they scented crime—
Odour of act or of dream—or beautiful thing,
Innocence, still as dogwood's floating hour
Where the wood ends windless, before the axe.

The evil hear that dissonance rouse and come.
And the most living, who explore the light
Far from our ways, hear—for a pathless place
Will draw the hounds' assault—and feel their hands
Yield up like blood the immeasurable sun.

If you are lost, the unperplexed police
Can look you in the eye and read a number.
And if you tremble they can tell you why:
You are the knowledge that will drag its feet
Like a disease unless we watch your step

Unless you keep stride with the street that we
Parade together in the needle's eye,
Shadows will smear your body like a swamp
And link your feet before the unfed hounds
That bay all divagations of the heart.

II

Obscure in flesh, a dancer's earliest thought,
The crime begins, an instep greened with fern
Pathless as water, a feeling alone and first,
As with no motive, as a naked foot
Descends to the judgment of the copperhead.

Like venom to the struck heart, before you hear,
You feel your motive, in the mouths of hounds.
The unthinkable extreme's but a step away;
More terrible than flak vomiting opal,
The green of fern like morphine winds your bones.

Turn back, for though you stand brimful of blood
The frantic pack hunting you, tight wineskin,
Will turn, if you turn from this cul-de-sac.
It opens on silence, toward the word of men.
But if you run you will limp like a god.

Quick as a spark flowing out of flame
The great cat leaps along the snowy ledge;
It has no need, like yours, when the hounds bell
Bravura up the esplanade of snow,
To sled a snarling black doubt at its throat.

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III

Deep is our grief. But no one grieves. We expire,
Easily blameless, in a padded chair;
The paper crackles in the Sunday sunlight,
The whole mind lifts and quickens on that wick
As if we had no other way to burn.

Yet I concede pride's pool, that mirrorful,
Aflare with the armadas of a day:
Science like elate Longfellow's Ship of State,
Praises about the prow, factory-loud
Midships scattering light, a peacock wake;

The arts, bucentaur on a seething calm,
Like beetles inching; coracles of God
Swashed in the wash of church and synagogue;
Barges and battles, pleasure and pomp and state,
Beside the keel of steel that speeds the race.

This too is burning. I've admired that brazier
Bright as a pond in the proprietary
Eye of a child who is lord of a stone
That could burst all: kick of a waterspout,
Over his toys it topples in his hands.

IV

And you, who heard the hounds instantly far
Hush, have not moved, through moonlight to moondown
Have heard no colder dark than an owl's question
Not meant for you, no dusk but the poorwill.
Why do you tremble to feel, at your throat, dawn?

Remember that rasped cry and whistling mew
That made a bony thought grow on the ground
And men of horror in a morning sun
Stand stripped to gristle. All shook like hounds. Like men
All curled their hands on satin gunbarrels.

But one, among them all, catlike looked down,
Only in their dream fellowed on his bough,
Torn tearer and avenger. The dissolute heart,
Muddling blood, living its old nature,
Monstrously confuses fury: man-dog-panther.

Beyond that blood, in blood what wild way leads?
Perfectly pathless: so the saints conceived
A lion's discipline. Braver, more free than
The foot of evil must be the feet of love,
That walk only on the water of light.

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Richard Wollheim

Crime, Sin, *and Mr. Justice Devlin*

IT WAS to a most evidently impressed gathering of people that on March 18th of this year Sir Patrick Devlin delivered his lecture on *The Enforcement of Morals*. The audience was not on the face of it an impressionable one: part professional lawyers, part professional lecture-goers, it seemed as hard a nut to crack as any. But the lecturer was up to it; within a few minutes of being introduced to his audience he had clearly established his ascendency. Everything about his manner and his appearance he pressed into the service of his performance, and everything scored: the thin, slightly hunched body with an air at once of scholarship and of youth, the arms crossed in front of him revealing long and delicate wrists, the collected voice and the even flow of perfectly constructed sentences, the regular movement of the hands reaching out to turn over the notes on the lectern, page by page, without the eyes ever bothering to fall on them, and the one single gesture that he permitted himself, that of occasionally running his forefinger round the line of his right ear as if to brush away the ends of a wig that were tickling him. There was little in the lecture in the way of decoration or rhetoric or surprise, but the lack of these things only increased the magisterial, the authoritative effect of the exposition. As a lecturer Sir Patrick, one felt, stood to other lecturers rather like an electric clock stands to other clocks: he offered considerably less to the senses, but as long as he went at all, he couldn't, it seemed, go wrong; his only mistake would be to stop.

But when he stopped, as he eventually had to, the effect of his skill persisted. One went away impressed. And as if to prove one right, the *Times* the next morning took the unusual step of devoting both an article and a leader to the lecture. Sir Patrick's views about sin and crime were well on the way, it seemed, to becoming at any rate one kind of orthodoxy. The only disturbing thing—leading to further disturbing thoughts—was that Sir Patrick Devlin's argument as it appeared in *The Times* bore little relation to Sir Patrick Devlin's argument as it survived in the memory of at least one member of his audience.

Now that the text of this remarkable lecture is available,* it is a good moment to pass in review the whole incident. What did Sir Patrick Devlin really say before the British Academy on March 18th on the subject of law and morals? Is what he said true, as at the time it seemed to so many? If it is true, is it the whole truth—and if it isn't true, where does the error lie? Direct and by no means easy questions: but surely for all of us questions worth the answering. There are, I believe, few subjects on which we *ought* to hold an opinion. But this subject of laws and morals is surely one of them. Always important, it has recently gained topicality. Sir Patrick referred frequently—from the original sub-title of his lecture onwards—to the Wolfenden Report as giving the subject a present claim on our attention: but he could equally well have mentioned other issues of the day like obscenity, or artificial insemination, or divorce by mutual consent, or

* The Hon. Sir Patrick Devlin: *The Enforcement of Morals, Maccabaean Lecture in Jurisprudence of the British Academy, 1959*. Oxford University Press. 3s. 6d.

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euthanasia, and thereby only over-established his case. If, then, the subject of Sir Patrick's lecture is all that significant, what more suitable way could there be of making an entry into it than through the examination of some concise but distinguished opinion on the matter?

The Enforcement of Morals, it should be pointed out, is likely to present two difficulties to the understanding of the general reader. In the first place—and this is criticism—for all its careful composition the organisation of material within the lecture is not totally satisfactory: this I shall try to bring out later. Secondly—and this is warning, not criticism—Mr. Justice Devlin sticks, with an austerity that may be rather puzzling to the layman, to the narrow track of jurisprudence. He confines himself to the principles to which law should conform, and utters no view on the law itself: and even when examining the principles of law, his interests are more what may be called *formal* than *substantive*—he asks how such principles are to be justified or validated, and when he controverts any such principle it is on account of its incoherence or inconsistency with better-grounded principles rather than on the score of its falsehood.

The content of *The Enforcement of Morals* is given in the form of answers to three questions that Devlin poses: he considers that between them these questions "cover the whole field," and since they occupy so central a place in his exposition it would perhaps be fairest to give them in his own words:

> 1. Has society the right to pass judgment at all on matters of morals? Ought there, in other words, to be a public morality, or are morals always a matter for private judgment?
> 2. If society has the right to pass judgment, has it also the right to use the weapon of the law to enforce it?
> 3. If so, ought it to use that weapon in all cases or only in some; and if only in some, on what principles should it distinguish?

To the first question Devlin answers *Yes*, and he regards this answer as a necessary condition for supposing there to be a case at all for intervention on the part of law in the life of the individual. And he arrives at his answer by an *a priori* argument which takes as its starting-point the nature of a society. A society to be a society—as opposed, presumably, to some looser association of men—requires the existence of a community of ideas between its members, and these ideas include not merely political ideas but also ideas about how people should behave and govern their lives, i.e., moral ideas. From this it follows not merely that society may pass moral judgments, but that it must: for in so far as it fails to pass them, it ceases to be in the true acceptance of the word a society.

To the second question, whether society has the right to enforce its moral judgments by means of the law, Devlin again returns an affirmative answer, and he thinks this answer is "very nearly dictated" by the answer to the previous question. For if it is part of the nature or essence of a society to possess a common morality, then society may properly use the law to enforce this morality just as it may use it to safeguard anything else essential to its existence. And this right, it further follows, is unconditional, or has no "theoretical limits" set to it: in other words, *whatever else may be the case* society has the right to enforce morality, and it is not true that—as many moralists and jurists have maintained—some further condition must exist before society can rightfully invoke the aid of the law. It is not true, for instance (as Mill maintained) that the immorality must be of an "other-regarding" character or that (as the Wolfenden Committee maintained) it must affect those who are "specially vulnerable" before it can be proceeded against. The unconditionality of society's right to prosecute morality is, according to Devlin, evident from the way that any formulation or definition of the condition on which this right might be thought to depend, has to be made so flexible before it is found generally acceptable that by that time it excludes nothing; it becomes, in effect, a standing condition of society.

But though society has the right to deal with immorality *as such*, the question arises *when* should the State exercise this right? Ought it to exercise it in all cases, or only in some? This brings us to the third and last of the questions that Devlin sets himself, and his answer is that the State ought to exercise its right only in some cases, and he then advances a number of "elastic" or "practical" principles which between them determine the range of human behaviour that is at once immoral and yet to be tolerated. The first principle, and the most important, is that there should be toleration of "the maximum individual freedom that is consistent with the integrity of society"; another is that "in any new matter of morals the law should be slow to act"; another is that "as far as possible privacy should be respected"; and

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finally there is the principle that "the law is concerned with the minimum and not with the maximum." On the question of the validation or justification of these principles Devlin is not entirely explicit, but he does throw out a hint about this which perhaps is worth following up.

Just before he embarks on a discussion of the principles of toleration he breaks off for a paragraph or two to enquire into the ground of that common morality whose enforcement these principles delimit. And his contention is that the source of the moral imperative in any society is to be found in the heart or breast of the reasonable man who is also a member of that society. The reasonable man is identified with "the man in the street," and then again with "the man in the Clapham omnibus" (an agreeable legal archaism) and then, to bring the matter closer to the law, with "the man in the jury box": who the reasonable man is *not* to be identified with (Devlin argues and secured loud laughter at the time) is "the rational man," for the reasonable man "is not expected to argue anything and his judgment may be largely a matter of feeling." Later, indeed, this "may" seems to become "must," for Devlin insists on morality's intimate connection with, if not determination by, deep and ungovernable feelings like indignation, disgust, and the sense of the abominable.

Now, it seems to me to be Devlin's view that the vague and imprecise principles of toleration have the same source as the principles of morality, and that if we want to know what immorality the law should not prosecute we find our answer just where we find it when we enquire what is immoral: in the breast of the reasonable man. He doesn't say this, but he suggests it: and I can see only one reason for not thinking it to be his considered view. That is this: that if it is not true, then Devlin ought not (as he does) to contrast the rules of morality on the one hand with the demands of toleration on the other; as though toleration were some later, more civilised refinement, softening and muting the primitive but categorical demands of morality. For if the principles of toleration have the same source as the principles of morality, toleration, so far from being different from, and therefore to be contrasted with, morality, is now a part of morality; indeed it is a very significant part of that section of morality which relates to the law and what it should command. However, I think that it would be more prudent to regard this as a slip in Devlin's exposition, and to consider his view to be that the limits of toleration also are fixed by the sentiments of the common man.

We may now summarise Devlin's argument as follows: It is an essential feature of a society that it should possess a common morality, whose foundations rest on the strong and ungovernable feelings of the ordinary citizen: this morality it has an unqualified right to enforce: a right derivative from the more general right of self-preservation, though in the enforcement of morals its hand ought to be restrained by a number of vague and imprecise principles, whose source is as profound as that of morality itself.

Is this argument acceptable?

It cannot be insisted on too strongly, from the very outset, that this enquiry is a theoretical one, and that those who aren't interested in theoretical matters might just as well abandon it now if they haven't already. What I mean is that Devlin provides us with a justification for distinguishing between sin and crime, but this justification can be interpreted in a number of different ways, some more, some less, liberal. A more liberal interpretation would mean that fewer sins fell on the criminal side, and so would lead to a more liberal code; a less liberal interpretation would mean that more sins fell on the criminal side, and so would lead to a code of greater stringency. Now there is a school of thought according to which all that matters is what the code commands, and that the reasons for it can be damned. But there is another school that holds that with poor jurisprudence good law is never safe, and that those who are right to-day for the wrong reasons may to-morrow without reason be wrong, and then who can gainsay them?

The first thing that strikes one about Devlin's argument is that there is an apparent inconsistency in it. For we are told at one point (in answer to the second question) that society has an unlimited right to enforce morality and then we are told later on (in answer to the third question) that there are certain conditions—conditions, it is true, capable only of very vague formulation—under which society ought not to enforce morality. But if "right" here is used to mean "right," and "ought" here is used to mean "ought," how can the argument taken as

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a whole avoid the charge of self-contradiction? For if one has the right to do something, then it can't be the case that one ought not to do it —unless "right" and "ought" are used in some naturalistic or non-ethical sense, which they aren't in Devlin's thesis. If I have a right to join a political party, then it can't be that I oughtn't to join a political party. Of course what is perfectly possible is that one could have the right to do something and yet it not be the case that one ought to do it: I could have the right to join a political party, yet have no obligation to do so—but this is a quite different proposition and no part of Devlin's case.

Why then does Devlin perpetrate this mistake? Why does he not see that he can't give the answer that he gives to the second question and also the answer that he gives to the third? Or, perhaps better, why doesn't he see it with sufficient clarity to do something about it? For (as a clever man must) he clearly senses that something is wrong, and he betrays this by the way he talks of society's right to enforce morality as *a right* when he is trying to establish it, but then talks of it as *a power* when he is trying to limit it. For, of course, a power to do something can properly be limited by the obligation not to do it: whereas it is evident that a right can't be. It is quite evident that I could have the power to join a political party, and not merely have no obligation to do so, but have a definite obligation not to do so. But if Devlin is uneasy about his position, he is also insufficiently uneasy about it.

Why is this? The explanation I suggest is that Devlin is blinded to the self-contradictoriness of what he asserts by an erroneous logical doctrine he holds about the nature of distinctions. According to this doctrine there is a fundamental difference between distinctions based upon a single criterion and distinctions based upon more than one criterion, and the former are superior to the latter: a superiority that is recorded by, for instance, talking of the former as "theoretical" and of the latter as "practical." Now acceptance of this doctrine might well affect the argument about society's right to enforce morality in the following way. To say that society has only a conditional right to enforce morality is to say that there is a distinction between sin and crime: but to say this would be, according to *this* doctrine of distinctions, to say that sin can be separated from crime by the application of a single criterion. If therefore one believes, as Devlin does, that there is no such single criterion and that any attempt to find one (along the lines laid down by Mill or the Wolfenden Committee) is doomed to failure, then one must say that society has an unconditional right to enforce morality, that its right has no theoretical limits set to it. But if one also believes, as Devlin also does, that one can separate sin and crime by the application of a number of different criteria, that one can define the area of actionable wrong-doing by means of various, separate principles, then one has to say that society ought on certain occasions not to enforce the right that it undoubtedly possesses. And this is just the self-contradiction in the argument.

Now it seems to me that Devlin could have extricated himself from this self-contradiction by dropping the theory of distinctions to which he subscribes. And the theory is anyhow unacceptable on general grounds. For a distinction is a line that divides: a line that divides one thing from another, so that we apply one word one side of the line, and another word the other side. And, of course, a line divides none the less for being determined by more than one factor: it is not even so certain that it divides the less clearly or the less sharply. Many words that we use with great frequency we apply in accordance with general criteria and we do not necessarily lose in precision thereby. What is strange, indeed, is that it should be a lawyer who calls any of this in doubt, for all the most common legal expressions are applied in accordance with a set of criteria, not just one. Take, for instance, "possession"; or "corporation"; or "murder"; or "*mens rea*." In no case is there a single, universally valid method for determining whether the word applies or doesn't. And yet our legal system works; people are in general clear about what the law would say if it were appealed to. Of course occasionally it breaks down, and people go to court to hear its *ipsissima verba*. But such incidents are exceptional: as Devlin himself puts it, "Good citizens are not expected to come within reach of it (i.e., the law) or to set their sights by it." But strange though it should be that a lawyer should feel discontented with the use of distinctions not based on a single criterion, it is doubly strange that the objection should come from a lawyer interested in moral philosophy. For the concepts of morality display to an even greater extent than the concepts of law a dependence upon a multiplicity of

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criteria. To talk even of "elastic principles" in connection with concepts like "right" and "wrong," "good" and "evil" seems hopelessly over-optimistic. And yet the moral code is also applied and interpreted easily enough, perhaps as easily as the legal code. Indeed, on Devlin's view of the matter, the criminal code—apart from what he calls its "regulatory element"—presupposes the smooth application of the moral code. "The criminal law as we know it is based upon moral principle."

It may, however, at this stage be said for Devlin that if he is at fault in distinguishing distinctions based on a single criterion and those based on more than one criterion and in honouring the former by the name "theoretical" and relegating the latter to the category of "practical," the fault is trivial. Perhaps the difference between the two sorts of distinction is of no importance. Perhaps Devlin does use two words where there is need only for one, but no one but he suffers thereby. This, however, is not so. For in the first place, Devlin is led to adopt a gratuitously self-righteous attitude towards moralists like Mill and the authors of the Wolfenden Report who look for a single criterion to distinguish sin that should be crime from sin that shouldn't be. He treats them, that is to say, as though they were guilty of a serious philosophical mistake. The authors of the Wolfenden Report, for instance, he describes as being "wrong in principle" and lays at their door an "error in jurisprudence." To talk in this way of one's opponent is quite seriously to discredit him: and if Devlin's opponents aren't all that wrong, he is genuinely at fault to give the impression that they are. But Devlin's attachment to a false theory of distinctions leads him not merely to distort his adversaries' views but also to distort his own. For under the influence of this theory he separates quite artificially his rejection of any unitary method of distinguishing sin from crime and his acceptance of one specific multiple method of making the distinction: and he separates the two discussions not merely logically but in space, and in the interval between the two discussions he asserts a theory that is false taken literally and is also likely to give no accurate indication of his own views, viz., the theory that society has a right to suppress immorality as such.

SETTING aside this inconsistency, let us now turn to consider the various stages in Devlin's argument. First, the argument for a right inherent in society—as opposed to the individuals who constitute it—to pass moral judgments. An initial difficulty here is to see what in Devlin's eyes makes a moral judgment a judgment of society, a public not a private judgment. A moral judgment, he insists, is *not* made by receiving the support of most members of the society in which it is passed. Its publicity seems to depend upon its being essential or internal to the nature of that society. Now if this is so, then the argument from the nature of society to the existence of public judgments of morality is clearly valid—for a society, it will be remembered, is partially defined in terms of a common morality. Wherever we have a society, we *must* have a common morality. Accordingly, the interest of the argument now focuses on its premiss; the conception of society as a community of ideas.

The conception is not novel. But over the last three hundred years it has been characteristic of the civilised parts of Europe—their pride, some would say—to develop a theory of politics which is in radical contrast to Devlin's. According to this theory the identity, and the continuity, of a society resides not in the common possession of a single morality but in the mutual toleration of different moralities. This theory is called Liberalism. It has been attacked often enough; it has formidable and uncompromising rivals in doctrines like Communism and Catholicism: but it still is the theory of most "uncommitted" thinkers in mid-twentieth-century Europe, for whom the problem seems not so much to demonstrate the acceptability or consistency of the theory as to establish exactly to what degree it can ever be realised and how great is the strain that it imposes upon human nature.

To some it might seem that the contrast between Liberalism and the political theory underlying *The Enforcement of Morals* is superficial. For toleration is a moral principle or idea, and why should we not therefore, in accordance with Devlin's theory, characterise the Liberal society as a society that finds its moral identity in the common or generally accepted principle of toleration? The suggestion is ingenious. But it won't work. It won't work, because though toleration *is* a moral principle, it is not so in the sense required by Devlin. For he requires of the common morality of a society that it should be rich and comprehensive enough for conformity to it to result in behaviour of a uniform kind over a fairly large area of human activity. Morality must be of

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this kind, else the problem of law and morals, as envisaged in *The Enforcement of Morals*, does not arise. For this problem is just how much of this behaviour is to be enforced by law. Now it is fairly clear that toleration cannot be seen as a morality conformity to which issues in uniform behaviour. A society can be marked by universal toleration and yet display no common pattern of behaviour: for what is tolerated may in each case be different. Accordingly, Devlin's insistence that it is in the nature of a society to possess a community of moral ideas is certainly incompatible with Liberalism; and therefore those who find Liberalism for one reason or another acceptable must reject the conception of society on which the whole of Devlin's argument depends.

But even if one were to accept Devlin's idea of society as what, I believe, used to be called "a moral entity," one might well want to object to his rather peculiar interpretation of this idea. For, as we have seen, Devlin not merely expounds what he considers to be the rôle of morality in society, he also has something to say about the nature of morality itself. And this is of an extreme subjectivist kind. It would be a negligible exaggeration of Devlin's moral philosophy to say that for him what is wrong is what makes "the man on the Clapham omnibus" sick. To ask whether the man is justified in being sick or whether he is sick on a false assumption or sick mistakenly or with no good reason (questions that we normally think it perfectly all right to raise about a moral judgment) is an evident absurdity. If he is sick, he is sick, and the best we can do is to see that he has no cause for being sick again. Reasons, justification, argument are at best persuasive tricks, at worst they are sophistries that obscure the intimate connection between the moral judgment and its emotional ground.

Such a totally irrationalist conception of morals can surely make little direct appeal, and the main interest of it must lie in the motives that prompted Devlin to embrace it; and from this point of view his case is of more than local interest. For he demonstrates in a peculiarly clear way a paradox that is recurrent in the history of ideas. We find, time and time again, a man setting out in the full intention of establishing morality on a basis that will make it at once independent of, and superior to, the individual judgments of individual men: of endowing it with an authority that is to be higher and more impersonal than the mere private conscience. And then when we look at the outcome of his efforts, we find that morality has been made to rest on what we would ordinarily think to be everything most arbitrary and unreliable in human nature; that is to say, feeling in its most primitive reaches. This is the paradox: on the one hand, morality is ascribed an objectivity that goes far beyond ordinary demands; on the other hand, what it is provided with is a grounding in total subjectivity. And yet there is a curious kind of logic, or unity of vision, that does unite these two apparently contrasted conceptions of morality, the extreme "objective" and the extreme "subjective," and accounts for the fact that they are not infrequently—though none the less uncomfortably—yoked together. For both these two conceptions share in the desire to place morality outside the forum of discussion, to make its distinctions not the fit subject for reasoning and its verdicts something that cannot be overturned in argument. Indeed it may be said with justice that both extreme objectivism and extreme subjectivism in ethics are best to be understood in terms of what they exclude; and they exclude much the same.

It is, moreover, a further fact that what they exclude is what it has been the triumph of civilisation to establish: the taming of the conscience by reason.

It is now time to turn to the last lap in Devlin's argument—the last lap, I say advisedly, because, as we have already seen, it is quite unjustified to separate, as he does, the second from the third enquiry: it is wrong to ask, first, whether society has a right to punish immorality, and, then (as though it were a quite separate question) whether this right is qualified or not. So let us now ask: Is it correct to move from society's right to pass judgments of a moral character to its right (qualified or unqualified) to enforce these judgments with the weapon of the law?

I think that the case may perhaps be argued; but what I am certain of is that it can't be argued as Devlin argues it. For he makes the transition by introducing the further premiss—which he regards as all but self-evident and therefore no real introduction into the argument—that society has a right to secure its own self-preservation. From this right society's right to enforce its own morality is supposed directly to follow. Now, society's right to self-preservation is something that, implicitly or explicitly, meets with fairly general acceptance. The right can,

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of course, be abused: as in the Moscow purges or the South African "treason trials." And even when exercised within due limits it is never popular. But only an anarchist could consistently deny it. Furthermore, to ground the right, as Devlin does, on the mere *existence* of society has traditional backing: it is, for instance, typical of Spinoza to argue from a thing's existence to its right to maintain itself in existence. And, arguing like this, Spinoza enjoys popular as well as traditional support.

But, I suggest, both the right of society to preserve itself and the argument that would derive this right from society's mere existence seem plausible and are acceptable only when "self-preservation" is understood in a far narrower sense than that in which it figures in Devlin's argument. For whereas in the popular understanding, self-preservation is contrasted with destruction or decay, Devlin contrasts it with change itself and makes no distinction between different kinds of change. Against corruption and against amelioration alike society is entitled to invoke the right to preserve itself. The moral identity of a democratic society is threatened by storm-troopers; the moral identity of a cannibal society is threatened by missionaries; the moral identity of Franco's Spain is threatened by Protestant bible-pedlars. If we argue with Devlin, we must concede that in all these cases the moral right of society to suppress those who would "subvest" it enjoys the same standing. Now, I doubt if this is what is meant by most of those who ordinarily talk of, and accept, society's right of self-preservation.

But even if we accept the right of self-preservation in this extended sense, it is by no means clear that it follows from it and the fact that society's morality is essential to its existence, that society has a right to enforce its morality. What *does* follow is that society has a right to preserve its morality. But are the enforcement and the preservation of morality one and the same thing? It is obvious that they are. It is, for instance, arguable that a morality, if enforced, ceases to be respected, and once it loses respect its existence is in danger. And, again, it can be argued that for a code of morals to preserve respect, it must sometimes be broken, and if it is rigorously enforced it runs the risk of never being broken. Historical examples confirm this abstract reasoning. Sumptuary laws may provide a reasonable system of taxation, but they have done little to inculcate a moral aversion to waste and extravagance; and the relation between Prohibition and Temperance has been the inverse of that desired by reformers.

Of course there is a conclusion to be drawn from Devlin's premises, but that conclusion is *not* merely unacceptable but *so* unacceptable that in itself it is a powerful argument against the truth of the premises that necessitate it. And that is the proposition that society can use any method at its disposal to suppress criticism of its prevailing moral ideas. For there can be no reasonable doubt that what really places a moral code in jeopardy is the free diffusion of ideas inimical to it. For unless the code is uselessly rudimentary, or the criticism of it extremely incompetent, sooner or later some of its leading ideas are going to be very roughly handled. And then the code really will be endangered. A moral code can survive a great deal in the way of contravention; what, I submit, it can survive very little of is controversion. Is Devlin really prepared to hand over to society the right to preserve its morality from the minds of its members? Devlin's dilemma is that either he must follow the argument where it really leads him, or else he must find another argument for remaining where he wishes to be.

I THINK then that *The Enforcement of Morals*, for all its great literary merits and its air of extreme clarity, contains little reasoning that is at once valid and acceptable. Of course the ultimate position may be correct: in the history of ideas as many bad arguments have been produced for true conclusions as for false ones.

But there may well be those who, reading *The Enforcement of Morals*, are led not merely to reject it but to reject in advance any argument of a similar kind. They may feel that any attempt to draw a line between sin and crime that makes reference to notions like the moral community or society's unqualified right to self-preservation is doomed to be unacceptable, and equally that any discussion of the subject that fails to mention human fallibility and the self-development of the individual and his faculties must be miserably incomplete. To those who feel like this I would lend a sympathetic ear. But I must, regretfully, point out that nothing I have set down here, none of the limited and local argument I have used against Devlin, can increase, to any measurable degree, the authority of what they say.

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Elizabeth Hardwick

Boston

WITH Boston and its mysteriously enduring reputation, "the reverberation is longer than the thunderclap," as Emerson observed about the tenacious fame of certain artists. Boston —wrinkled, spindly-legged, depleted of nearly all her spiritual and cutaneous oils, provincial, self-esteeming—has gone on spending and spending her inflated bills of pure reputation, decade after decade. Now, one supposes it is all over at last. The old jokes embarrass, the anecdotes are so many thrice-squeezed lemons, and no new fruit hangs on the boughs. All the American regions are breaking up, ground down to a standard American corn meal. And why not Boston, which would have been the most difficult to maintain? There has never been anything quite like Boston as a creation of the American imagination, or perhaps one should say as a creation of the American scene. Some of the legend was once real, surely. Our utilitarian, fluid landscape has produced a handful of regional conceptions, popular images, brief and naked: the conservative Vermonter, the boastful Texan, the honeyed Southerner. "Graciousness is ours," brays a coarsened South; and the sheiks of Texas cruise around their desert.

The Boston image is more complex. The city is felt to have, in the end, a pure and special nature, absurd no doubt but somehow valuable. Empiricism will not carry one far; faith and *being*, sheer being above all, are needed. To be it, old Boston, real Boston, very Boston, and—one shrinks before the stale claim—proper Boston; there lies knowledge. An author can hardly fail to turn a penny or two on this magical subject. Everyone will consent to be informed on it, to be slyly entertained by it. *Actual* Boston is governed largely by people of Irish descent and more and more, recently, by men of Italian descent. Not long ago, the old Yankee, Senator Saltonstall, remarked wistfully that there were still a good many Anglo-Saxons in Massachusetts, his own family among them. Extinction is foreshadowed in the defence.

Plainness and pretension restlessly feuding and combining; wealth and respectability and firmness of character ending in the production of a number of diverting individual tics or, at the best, instances of high culture. Something of that sort is the legendary Boston soul or so one supposes without full confidence because the old citizens of Boston vehemently hold to the notion that the city and their character are ineffable, unknowable. When asked for an opinion on the admirable novel, *Boston Adventure*, or even the light social history, *The Proper Bostonians*, the answer invariably comes, "Not Boston." The descriptive intelligence, the speculative mind, the fresh or even the merely open eye are felt to discover nothing but errors here, be they errors of praise or censure. Still, wrongheadedness flourishes, the subject fascinates,

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and the Athenaeum's list of written productions on this topic is nearly endless.

The best book on Boston is Henry James' novel, *The Bostonians*. By the bald and bold use of the place-name, the unity of situation and person is dramatised. But poor James, of course, was roundly and importantly informed by everyone, including his brother William, that this too was "not Boston," and, stricken, he pushed aside a superb creation, and left the impregnable, unfathomable Boston to its mysteries. James' attitude towards the city's intellectual consequence and social charm is one of absolute impiety. A view of the Charles River reveals

> ...an horizon indented at empty intervals with wooden spires, the masts of lonely boats, the chimneys of dirty "works," over a brackish expanse of anomalous character, which is too big for a river and too small for a bay.

A certain house has

> a peculiar look of being both new and faded—a kind of modern fatigue—like certain articles of commerce which are sold at a reduction as shop-worn.

However, there is little natural landscape in James' novel. The picture is, rather, of the psychological Boston of the 1870's, a confused scene, slightly mad with neurotic repressions, provincialism, and earnestness without intellectual seriousness.

JAMES' view of Boston is not the usual one, although his irony and dissatisfaction are shared by Henry Adams who says that "a simpler manner of life and thought could hardly exist, short of cave-dwelling," and by Santayana who spoke of Boston as a "moral and intellectual nursery, always busy applying first principles to trifles."

The great majority of the writings on Boston are in another spirit altogether—frankly unctuous—for the town has always attracted men of quiet and timid and tasteful opinion, men interested in old families and things, in the charms of times recently past, collectors of anecdote about those Boston worthies hardly anyone can still clearly identify, men who spoke and preached and whose style and fame deteriorated quickly: Rufus Choate, Dr. Channing, Edward Everett Hale, Phillips Brooks, and Theodore Parker; names that remain in one's mind, without producing an image or a fact, as the marks are left on the wall after the picture has been removed. William Dean Howells held a more usual view than Henry James or Adams or Santayana. Indeed Howells' original enthusiasm for garden and edifice, person and setting, is more than a little *exalté*. The first sight of the Chapel at Mount Auburn Cemetery moved him more than the "Acropolis, Westminster Abbey, and Santa Croce in one." The massive, grey stones of "the Public Library and the Aethenaeum are hardly eclipsed by the Vatican and the Pitti." And so on.

The importance of Boston was intellectual and as its intellectual donations to the country have diminished, so it has declined from its lofty symbolic meaning to become a more lowly image, a sort of farce of conservative exclusiveness and snobbish humour. Marquand's George Apley is a figure of the decline—fussy, sentimental, farcically mannered, archaic. He cannot be imaged as an Abolitionist, an author, a speaker; he is merely a "character," a very idiosyncratic and simple-minded one. The old Boston had something of the spirit of Bloomsbury: clannish, worldly, and intellectually serious. About the historian Prescott, Van Wyck Brooks could say ". . . for at least ten years, Prescott had been hard at work, harder, perhaps, than any Boston merchant." History, indeed, with its long, leisurely, gentlemanly labours, the books arriving by post, the cards to be kept and filed, the sections to be copied, the documents to be checked, is the ideal pursuit for the New England mind. All the Adamses spent a good deal of their lives on one kind of history or another. The eccentricity, studiousness, and study-window slow pace of life of the historical gentleman lay everywhere about the Boston scene. For money, society, fashion, extravagance, one went to New York. But now, the descendants of the old intellectual aristocracy live in the

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respectable suburbs and lead the healthy, outdoor life that atrophies the sedentary nerves of culture. The blue-stocking, the eccentric, the intransigent bring a blush of uncertainty and embarrassment to the healthy young couple's cheek.

BOSTON to-day can still provide a fairly stimulating atmosphere for the banker, the broker, for doctors and lawyers. "Open end" investments prosper, the fish come in at the dock, the wool market continues, and workers are employed in the shoe factories in the nearby towns. For the engineer, the physicist, the industrial designer, for all the highly-trained specialists of the electronic age, Boston and its area are of seemingly unlimited promise. Sleek, well-designed factories and research centres pop up everywhere; the companies plead, in the Sunday papers, for more chemists, more engineers, and humbly relate the executive benefits of salary and pension and advancement they are prepared to offer. But otherwise, for the artist, the architect, the composer, the writer, the philosopher, the historian, for those humane pursuits for which the town was once noted and even for the delights of entertainment, for dancing, acting, cooking, Boston is a bewildering place.

There is, first of all, the question of Boston or New York. (The question is not new; indeed it was answered in the last decades of the last century in favour of New York as the cultural centre of America.) It is, in our day, only a private and personal question: which of the two Eastern cities should one try to live and work in? It is a one-sided problem. For the New Yorker, San Francisco or Florida, perhaps—Boston, never. In Boston, New York tantalises; one of the advantages of Boston is said, wistfully, to be its nearness to New York. It is a bad sign when a man who has come to Boston or Cambridge, Massachusetts, from another place begins to show an undivided acceptance of his new town. Smugness is the great vice of the two places. Between puffy self-satisfaction and the fatiguing wonder if one wouldn't be happier, more productive, more appreciated in New York a thoughtful man makes his choice.

Boston is not a small New York, as they say a child is not a small adult but is, rather, a specially organised small creature with its small-creature's temperature, balance, and distribution of fat. In Boston there is an utter absence of that wild electric beauty of New York, of the marvellous excited rush of people in taxi-cabs at twilight, of the great Avenues and Streets, the restaurants, theatres, bars, hotels, delicatessens, shops. In Boston the night comes down with an incredibly heavy, small-town finality. The cows come home; the chickens go to roost; the meadow is dark. Nearly every Bostonian is in his own house or in someone else's house, dining at the home board, enjoying domestic and social privacy. The "nice little dinner party"—for this the Bostonian would sell his soul. In the evenings, the old "accommodators" dart about the city, carrying their black uniforms and white aprons in a paper bag. They are on call to go anywhere, to cook and serve dinners. Many of these women are former cooks and maids, now living on Social Security retirement pensions, supplemented by the fees for these evening "accommodations" to the community. Their style and the bland respectability of their cuisine keep up the social tone of the town. They are like those old slaves who stuck to their places and, even in the greatest deprivation, graciously went on toting things to the Massa'.

There is a curious flimsiness and indifference in the commercial life of Boston. The restaurants are, charitably, to be called mediocre; the famous sea food is only palatable when raw. Otherwise it usually has to endure the deep-fry method that makes everything taste like the breaded pork chops of the Middle West, which in turn taste like the fried sole of Boston. Here, French restaurants quickly become tea-roomy, as if some sort of rapid naturalisation had taken place. There is not a single attractive eating-place on the water-front. An old downtown restaurant of considerable celebrity, Locke-Ober, has been expanded, let out, and

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"costumed" by one of the American restaurant decorators whose productions have a ready-made look, as if the designs had been chosen from a catalogue. But for the purest eccentricity, there is the "famous" restaurant, Durgin Park, which is run like a boarding-house in a mining town. And so it goes. Downtown Boston at night is a dreary jungle of honky-tonks for sailors, dreary department-store windows, Loew's movie-houses, hill-billy bands, strippers, parking lots, undistinguished new buildings. Midtown Boston—small, expensive shops, the inevitable Elizabeth Arden and Helena Rubinstein "salons," Brooks Brothers—is deserted at night, except for people going in and out of the Ritz Carlton Hotel, the only public place in Boston that could be called "smart." The merchandise in the Newbury Street shops is designed in a high fashion, elaborate, furred, and sequined, but it is never seen anywhere. Perhaps it is for out-of-town use, like a travelling man's mistress.

Just as there is no smart life, so there is no Soho, no Greenwich Village. Recently a man was murdered in a parking lot in the Chinatown area. His address was given as the South End, a lower-class section, and he was said to be a "free-spender," making enough money as a summer bar-tender on Cape Cod to lead a free-wheeling life the rest of the year. One paper referred to the unfortunate man as a "member of the Beacon Hill Bohemia set." This designation is of considerable interest because there is no "Bohemia" in Boston, neither upper nor lower; the detergent of bourgeois Boston cleans everything, effortlessly, completely. If there were a Bohemia, its members *would* live on Beacon Hill, the most beautiful part of Boston and, like the older parts of most cities, fundamentally classless, providing space for the rich in the noble mansions and for the people with little money in the run-down alleys. For both of these groups the walled gardens of Beacon Hill, the mews, the coach houses, the river views, the cobble-stone streets are a necessity and the yellow brick structures of the Fenway are poison. *Espresso* bars have sprung up, or rather dug down in basements, but no summer of Bohemianism is ushered into town. This reluctance is due to the Boston legend and its endurance as a lost ideal, a romantic quest.

SOMETHING transcendental is always expected in Boston. There is, one imagines, behind the drapery on Mount Vernon Street a person of democratic curiosity and originality of expression, someone alas—and this is the tiresome Boston note —*well-born*. It is likely to be, even in imagination, a *she*, since women now and not the men provide the links with the old traditions. Of her, then, one expects a certain unprofessionalism, but it is not expected that she will be superficial; she is profoundly conventional in manner of life but capable of radical insights. To live in Boston means to seek some connection with this famous local excellence, the regional type and special creation of the city.

An angry disappointment attends the romantic soul bent upon this quest. When the archæological diggings do turn up an authentic specimen it will be someone old, nearly gone, "whom you should have known when she was young"—and could hear. The younger Bostonians seem in revolt against the old excellence, with its indulgent, unfettered development of the self. Revolt, however, is too active a word for a passive failure to perpetuate the ideal high-mindedness and intellectual effort. With the fashionable young women of Boston, one might just as well be on Long Island. In the nervous, shy, earnest women there is a lingering hint of the peculiar local development. Terrible *faux-pas* are constantly being made by this reasonable, honourable person, followed by blushes and more false steps and explanations and the final blinking, retreating blush.

Among the men, the equivalent of the blushing, blurting, sensitive, and often "fine" woman, is a person who exists everywhere perhaps but nowhere else with such elaboration of type, such purity of example. This is the well-born failure, the amateur not by choice but from some fatal reticence of tem-

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perament. They are often descendants of intellectual Boston, odd-ball grandsons, charming and sensitive, puzzlingly complicated, living on a "small income." These unhappy men carrying on their conscience the weight of unpublished novels, half-finished paintings, impossible historical projects, old-fashioned poems, unproduced plays. Their inevitable "small income" is a sort of dynastic flaw, like haemophilia. Much money seems often to impose obligations of energetic management; from great fortunes the living cells receive the hints of the possibilities of genuine power, enough to make some enormously rich Americans endure the humiliations and fatigues of political office. Only the most decadent and spoiled think of living in idleness on millions; but this notion does occur to the man afflicted with ten thousand a year. He will commit himself with a dreamy courage to whatever traces of talent he may have and live to see himself punished by the New England conscience which demands accomplishments, duties performed, responsibilities noted, and energies sensibly used. The dying will accuses and the result is a queer kind of Boston incoherence. It is literally impossible much of the time to tell what some of the most attractive men in Boston are talking about. Half-uttered witticisms, grave and fascinating obfuscations, points incredibly qualified, hesitations infinitely refined—one staggers about, charmed and confused, by the twilight.

But this person, with his longings, connects with the old possibilities and, in spite of his practical failure, keeps alive the memory of the best days. He may have a brother who has retained the mercantile robustness of nature and easy capacity for action and yet has lost all belief in anything except money and class, who may practise private charities, but entertain profoundly trivial national and world views. A Roosevelt, Harriman, or Stevenson are impossible to imagine as members of the Boston aristocracy; here the vein of self-satisfaction and public indifference cuts too deeply. Indeed great vulgarity of mind is not always alien to the finest Boston stock of the present age.

HARVARD (across the river in Cambridge) and Boston are two ends of one moustache. Harvard is now so large and international it has altogether avoided the whimsical stagnation of Boston. But the two places need each other, as we knowingly say of a mis-matched couple. Without the faculty, the visitors, the events that Harvard brings to the life here, Boston would be intolerable to anyone except genealogists, antique dealers, and those who find repletion in a closed local society.

Unfortunately, Harvard, like Boston, has "tradition," and in America this always carries with it the risk of a special staleness of attitude, and of pride, incredibly and comically swollen like the traits of hypocrisy, selfishness, or lust in the old dramas. At Harvard some of the vices of "society" exist, of Boston society that is—arrogance and the blinding dazzle of being, *being at Harvard*. The moral and social temptations of Harvard's unique position in American academic life are great and the pathos is seen in those young faculty members who are presently at Harvard but whose appointments are not permanent and so they may be thrown down, banished from the beatific condition. The young teacher in this position lives in a dazed state of love and hatred, pride and fear; their faces have a look of desperate yearning, for they would rather serve in heaven than reign in hell. For those who are not banished, for the American at least, since the many distinguished foreigners at Harvard need not endure these piercing and fascinating complications, something of Boston seems to seep into their characters. They may come from anywhere in America and yet to be at Harvard unites them with the transcendental, legendary Boston, with New England in flower. They begin to revere the old worthies, the houses, the paths trod by so many before, and they feel a throb of romantic sympathy for the directly-gazing portraits on the walls, for the old graves and old names in the Mount Auburn Cemetery. All of this has charm and may even have a degree of social and intellectual value—and then again it may not. Devious parochialisms, irrelevant snob-

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beries, a bemused exaggeration of one's own productions, pimple the soul of a man upholding tradition in a forest of relaxation, such as most of America is thought to be. Henry James' observation in his book on Hawthorne bears on this:

> . . . it is only in a country where newness and change and brevity of tenure are the common substance of life, that the fact of one's ancestors having lived for a hundred and seventy years in a single spot would become an element of one's morality. It is only an imaginative American that would feel urged to keep reverting to this circumstance, to keep analysing and cunningly considering it.

IF THE old things of Boston are too heavy and plushy, the new either hasn't been born or is appallingly shabby and poor. As early as Thanksgiving, Christmas decorations unequalled for cheap ugliness go up in the Public Garden and on the Boston Common. Year after year, the city fathers bring out crêches and camels and Mother and Child so badly made and of such tasteless colours they verge on blasphemy, or would seem to do so if it were not for the further degradation of secular little men blowing horns and the canes of peppermint hanging on the lamps. The shock of the first sight is the most interesting; later the critical senses are stilled as year after year the same bits are brought forth and gradually one realises that the whole thing is a sort of permanent exhibition.

Recently the dying downtown shopping section of Boston was to be graced with flowers, an idea perhaps in imitation of the charming potted geraniums and tulips along Fifth Avenue in New York. Commercial Boston produced a really amazing display: old, grey square bins, in which were stuck a few bits of yellowing, dying evergreen. It had the look of exhausted greenery thrown out in the garbage and soon the dust-bins were full of other bits of junk and discard—people had not realised or recognised the decorative hope and saw only the rubbishy result.

The municipal, civic backwardness of Boston does not seem to bother its more fortunate residents. For them and for the observer, Boston's beauty is serene and private, an enclosed, intense personal life, rich with domestic variation, interesting stuffs and things, showing the hearthside vitality of a Dutch genre painting. Of an evening the spirits quicken, not to public entertainment, but instead to the sights behind the draperies, the glimpses of drawing-rooms on Louisburg Square, panelled walls and French chandeliers on Commonwealth Avenue, bookshelves and flower-filled bays on Beacon Street. Boston is a winter city. Every apartment has a fireplace. In the town houses, old persons climb steps without complaint, four or five floors of them, cope with the maintenance of roof and gutter and survive the impractical kitchen and resign themselves to the useless parlours. This is life; the house, the dinner party, the charming gardens, one's high ceilings, fine windows, lacy grillings, magnolia trees, inside shutters, glassed-in studios on the top of what were once stables, outlook on the "river side." Setting is serious. When it is not serious, when a splendid old private house passes into less dedicated hands, an almost exuberant swiftness of deterioration can be noticed. A rooming-house, although privately owned, is no longer in the purest sense a private house and soon it partakes of some of the feckless, ugly, municipal neglect. The contrasts are startling. One of two houses of almost identical exterior design will have shining windows, a bright brass door-knocker, and its twin will show a *"Rooms"* sign peering out of dingy glass, curtained by those lengths of flowered plastic used in the shower bath. Garbage lies about in the alleys behind the rooming-houses, discarded furniture blocks old garden gateways. The vulnerability of Boston's way of life, the meanness of most things that fall outside the needs of the upper classes, are shown with a bleak and terrible fullness in the rooming-houses on Beacon Street. And even some of the best houses show a spirit of mere "maintenance," which, while useful for the individual with money, leads to civic dullness, architectural torpor, and stagnation. In the Back Bay area, a voluntary, casual association of property owners exists for the purpose of trying to keep

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the alleys clean, the streets lighted beyond their present medieval darkness, and to pursue other worthy items of neighbourhood value. And yet this same group will "protest" against the attractive Café Florian on Newbury Street (smell of coffee too strong!) and against the brilliantly exciting Boston Arts Festival held in the beautiful Public Garden for two weeks in June. The idea that Boston might be a vivacious, convenient place to live in is not uppermost in these residents' thoughts. Trying to buy groceries in the best sections of the Back Bay region is an interesting study in commercial apathy.

A GREAT many of the young Bostonians leave town, often taking off with a sullen demand for a freer, more energetic air. And yet many of them return later, if not to the city itself, to the beautiful sea towns and old villages around it. For the city itself, who will live in it after the present human landmarks are gone? No doubt, some of the young people there at the moment will persevere, and as a reward for their fidelity and endurance will themselves later become monuments, old types interesting to students of what our colleges call American Civilisation. Boston is defective, out-of-date, vain, and lazy, but if you're not in a hurry it has a deep, secret appeal. Or, more accurately, those who like it may make of its appeal a secret. The weight of the Boston legend, the tedium of its largely fraudulent posture of traditionalism, the disillusionment of the Boston present as a cultural force, make quick minds hesitate to embrace a region too deeply compromised. They are on their guard against falling for it, but meanwhile they can enjoy its very defects, its backwardness, its slowness, its position as one of the large, possible cities on the Eastern sea-coast, its private, residential charm. They speak of going to New York and yet another season finds them holding back, positively enjoying the Boston life. . . .

. . . Outside it is winter, dark. The curtains are drawn, the wood is on the fire, the table has been checked, and in the stillness one waits for the guests who come stamping in out of the snow. There are lectures in Cambridge, excellent concerts in Symphony Hall, bad plays being tried out for the hungry sheep of Boston before going to the hungry sheep of New York. Arnold Toynbee or T. S. Eliot or Robert Frost or Robert Oppenheimer or Barbara Ward is in town again. The cars are double-parked so thickly along the narrow streets that a moving vehicle can scarcely manœuvre; the pedestrians stumble over the cobbles; in the back alleys a cat cries and the rats, enormously fat, run in front of the car lights creeping into the parking spots. Inside it is cosy, Victorian, and gossipy. Someone else has *not* been kept on Harvard. The old Irish "accommodator" puffs up stairs she had never seen before a few hours previously and announces that dinner is ready. A Swedish journalist is just getting off the train at the Back Bay Station. He has been exhausted by cocktails, reality, life, taxis, telephones, bad connections in New York and Chicago, pulverised by a "good time." Sighing, he alights, seeking old Boston, a culture that hasn't been alive for a long time . . . and rest.

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The Faith of Darwinism

By Marjorie Grene

"Vainly did we philosophers and critical theologians over and over again decree the extermination of miracles, our ineffectual sentence died away, because we could neither dispense with miraculous agency, nor point to any natural force able to supply it, where it had seemed most indispensable. Darwin has demonstrated this force, this process of Nature; he has opened the door by which a happier coming race will cast out miracles, never to return. Everyone who knows what miracles imply will praise him, in consequence, as one of the greatest benefactors of the human race."

THUS wrote the Biblical critic David Strauss in *The Old Faith and the New*, published in English translation in 1873 and quoted by Gertrude Himmelfarb in her *Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution*.* The sixties and seventies saw, not only the triumph of Darwinism over religion, but the rise of Darwinism *as* religion: as a religion of humanity, impelled by the inhumanity of literal Christian belief. Darwin, though himself only partly a Darwinian, yet set the tone for this aspect of the Darwinian cult in his autobiography—in a passage suppressed by his widow and included in the new complete edition:

> I can indeed hardly see how anyone ought to wish Christianity to be true; for, if so, the plain language of the text seems to show that the men who do not believe, and this would include my Father, Brother and almost all my best friends, will be everlastingly punished. And this is a damnable doctrine.

This "damnable doctrine" of Christianity has been the target of evolutionary ethics from the early T. H. Huxley to Julian Huxley, George Gaylord Simpson, or Theodosius Dobzhansky in the present generation. Sin, punishment, the last vestige of the jealous Hebrew god, such thinkers feel, have been vanquished under the benevolent banner of purely naturalistic nature, unplanned and therefore unresentful. So we have, for instance, Julian Huxley's "morality of evolutionary direction":

> Anything which permits or promotes open development is right, anything which restricts or frustrates development is wrong.

Some Darwinians, it is true, deny this ethical implication of Darwinism. T. H. Huxley, in his later years, denied it; so does the British naturalist David Lack in a recent book called *Evolutionary Theory and Christian Belief: The Unresolved Conflict*. For such thinkers, Darwinian nature, which scientific conscience compels them to accept, is the blind ongoing of fact indifferent to value and incapable of generating value. Morality must maintain itself, on this view, not within, but against the evolutionary stream. But this is, on the whole, an exceptional view; the humanitarian *Leitmotif* has been a genuine force in the origin and spread of Darwinism.

Yet this is only half the story, and the lesser half. It is as a *religion of science* that Darwinism chiefly held, and holds men's minds. The derivation of life, of man, of man's deepest hopes and highest achievements, from the external and indirect determination of small chance errors, appears as the very keystone of the naturalistic universe. And the defence of natural selection appears, therefore, as the defence of the integrity, the independence, the dignity of science itself. In this spirit T. H. Huxley first rose to its defence:

> . . . I have said that the man of science is the sworn interpreter of nature in the high court of reason. But of what avail is his honest speech, if ignorance is the assessor of the judge, and prejudice the foreman of the jury? . . . To those whose life is spent, to use Newton's noble words, in picking up here a pebble and there a pebble on

* Chatto & Windus. 42s.

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> the shores of the great ocean of truth—who watch, day by day, the slow but sure advance of that mighty tide, bearing on its bosom the thousand treasures wherewith man ennobles and beautifies his life—it would be laughable, if it were not so sad, to see the little Canutes of the hour enthroned in solemn state, bidding that great wave to stay, and threatening to check its beneficent progress. . . . Surely, it is the duty of the public to discourage anything of this kind, to discredit these foolish meddlers who think they do the Almighty a service by preventing a thorough study of His works.

Thus, a century ago, Darwinism against Christian orthodoxy.

To-day the tables are turned. The modified, but still characteristically Darwinian theory has itself become an orthodoxy, preached by its adherents with religious fervour, and doubted, they feel, only by a few muddlers imperfect in scientific faith. Sir Gavin de Beer's great classic *Embryos and Ancestors*, for example, presents in brilliant array a host of embryological data bearing on evolution, but with no apparent relevance to the process of natural selection. Yet he concludes the third edition:

> It is now recognised that evolution is the result of selection acting on heritable variation in the form of mutation and recombination of Mendelian genes. *These processes must have been at work in all the evolutionary changes considered in this book.* The morphological modes describe aspects of the course which the changes took, *but it was variation and selection which caused them.* (my italics)

And accordingly, in his centennial essay in *Endeavour*, Sir Gavin assures us that

> . . . with the same confidence as it accepts Copernicus's demonstrations of the movement of the Earth round the sun and Newton's formulation of the laws of this movement, science can now celebrate the centenary of the first general principle to be discovered applicable to the entire realm of living beings.

Biology, thanks to Darwin (with assistance, indeed, from the rediscoverers of Mendel), has at last matured into a proper science, "Lamarck nonsense" is disinherited, old metaphysical follies re-echo only distantly in the ears of a few foolish mystics. Branches of biology once disparate—paleontology, embryology, ecology, taxonomy, genetics—converge on the new, great synthesis. Matter becoming life (and mind) through natural selection of small chance mutations; life spreading in ever new directions through opportunistic exploitation of the unexpected: of new niches in nature happening to fit a slightly new departure in the arrangement of established genotypes, or slightly new genotypes happening to tumble into hitherto unexploited environments—this is the vision which experiment and mathematics, field observation and its statistical analysis combine to support.

THERE was a time, about the turn of the century, when the concept of mutation—i.e. of a sudden change in the structure of the germ plasm—appeared to contradict Darwin's view of a slow and gradual process in which slightly less fit variations were eliminated in favour of the slightly better adapted. But beginning with Sir Ronald Fisher's *Genetical Theory of Natural Selection* in 1930 there has arisen a most imposing synthesis of these two conceptions. Darwin did not know whether inheritance was blending or particulate—whether variations once occurring were or were not assimilated in some unknown way into the material of inheritance. Mendel, whose work lay buried till the early 20th century, had, in fact, in Darwin's lifetime proved the particulate basis. This seemed at first to mean that variations, for the use of evolution, are sudden and large, and not minute and gradual as Darwin imagined. What Fisher saw, however, was (1) that particulate inheritance retains variations for selection to work on, as blending inheritance would not, and (2) that it is not the changes in individuals that matter, for the purposes of evolution, but the changes in populations—and these *are* gradual. For if you have an active interbreeding population, say, of a thousand fruit flies, and you get a changed gene, say, for eyeless, in one chromosome in one of them, the proportion will now be 999 normal flies to one containing the mutation (and the corresponding change in the genes will be to 1,999 of the normal *allele* and one of the mutated form); in the next generation you may have 998 to two (or 1,998 normal genes to two mutated ones) and so on. This kind of change in a population is usually, and can be, very gradual; and it is measurable by statistical methods. In fact this measurement is said to *be* the measure of selective intensity—the change in Mendelian proportions in a population *is* natural selection, or genetical selection, as it is more properly called, and Darwinism is vindicated.

Yet surely, one may protest, Darwin's theory had to do with the "preservation of favoured races," the survival of the fittest and all that. On the face of it, these changing Mendelian ratios seem to have no connection with increasing adaptation, or the elimination of the unfit, or anything of the sort. Yet here, too, the modern theory is more Darwinian than Darwin himself. "Evolution," Fisher says, "is progressive adaptation and consists in nothing else." And life itself is evolution: populations evolving,

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fitting in here and there, weeding themselves out here and there, as changing opportunities appear and disappear. That is what selective intensity measures; for what else could it conceivably be measuring? Darwin excepted some characters from this rule, seeing no reason to consider them advantageous or otherwise. But modern ecological methods have greatly amplified and codified the relevant data, and have proved even some of Darwin's exceptions—notably, for instance, colour polymorphism in the common land snail—to be in fact confirmations of his view. For modern Darwinians only trivial variations can be indifferent to selection pressure. Whatever characters are stable must have a reason, and the reason must be adaptive, otherwise natural selection could not control it.

The compelling power of the selection theory—that is, the view that all major trends in evolution are adaptive, and that the genesis of adaptations is explained by the gradual and external control of chance variations through selection pressure—is well illustrated, for example, by de Beer's reasoning in the centennial essay quoted above. Attacking those who invoke against the selection theory its "mathematical improbability," he argues that they

> . . . can be refuted out of their own mouths. Muller has estimated that on the existing knowledge of the percentage of mutations that are beneficial, and a reasoned estimate of the number of mutations that would be necessary to convert an amoeba into a horse, based on the average magnitude of the effects of mutations, the number of mutations required on the basis of chance alone, if there were no natural selection, would be of the order of one thousand raised to the power of one million. *This impossible and meaningless figure serves to illustrate the power of natural selection in collecting favourable mutations and minimising waste of variation, for horses do exist and they have evolved.* (my italics)

In other words, if horses have evolved—and few are those who would like to deny it—and if an explanation of this transformation through random mutations alone is excessively unlikely—as indeed it seems to be, since the great majority of mutations so far observed are adverse or even lethal—then it *must* be the automatic selection, in each generation, of very slightly advantageous variants that has built up the otherwise astonishing result. But how, one may ask, do we know this? If mutation alone cannot explain the evolutionary process—the origin of life, of sentient life, of intelligent life—why is natural selection—the elimination of the worst mutations, a negative and external agency—the only conceivable alternative?

And what does this selective process really consist in? Selection selects by definition the better adapted alternatives; yet adaptation often leads not to survival, let alone to the evolution of new forms, but to extinction. In de Beer's centennial argument, however, this fact appears as evidence against a belief in teleology or providence, not against selection. So he argues, on the very same page as the passage just quoted:

> It can be shown that the more detailed the adaptation, the more "improbable" it may appear as a product of "chance," the more likely its possessor is to be doomed to extinction through inability to become adapted to changed conditions. Structures may be developed which at first benefit individuals in their competition to survive; but by continued selection such structures may become exaggerated and lead to extinction of the species. This seems to have been what happened to the Huia-bird, where mated pairs constantly remained in company together, and the beaks of the male and female reached an extraordinary disparity of size in adaptation to their very special feeding, but failed to enable the birds to obtain ordinary food when their special diet was unavailable. Excess, even of adaptation, is harmful, and the fossil record shows that the vast majority of lines of evolution have led to extinction, which is a grim comment on the alleged powers of providential guidance and purpose.

So it is; and surely, thanks largely to Darwin's influence, few educated people believe literally any more in "providential guidance and purpose" in nature. But is it not also a "grim comment" on natural selection? Yet convinced neo-Darwinians apparently see no such implication in the Huia-bird's fate.

IN SHORT, three concepts, *evolution*, in the minimal sense of "descent with modification" (no "emergence," no "higher and lower" allowed), *variation*, in the sense of Mendelian micromutation, tiny changes in the structure or arrangement of the genes, the ultimate material of heredity (no sweeping or sudden alterations allowed), and *natural selection*, the decrease in frequency of those variants that happen in each successive generation to be less well adapted than others to their particular environment: these three form a tight circle within which, in happy self-confirmation, neo-Darwinian thinking moves. To those who believe in it, this circle is an ample intellectual dwelling place, roomy enough in fact to house all the immense achievements of modern biological research. To those not so convinced, however, the circle seems a strangely constricted one. They may even agree with the Professor Emeritus of Zoology at Cambridge that "no amount of argument, or clever epigram, can disguise the inherent improbability of orthodox (Darwinian) theory."

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And though such non-believers may not, as Dr. Himmelfarb suggests, include a "growing number of scientists," neither are they so few or so feeble as neo-Darwinian writers sometimes suggest.

How does this tight trio of concepts take so firm a hold upon so many and such able minds? If we are not convinced by the neo-Darwinian dogma we may well ask this question; and if we do so, Dr. Himmelfarb's book will give us important help on the road to an answer. True, she is dealing principally with 19th-century Darwinism; she brings to life not only Darwin as a scientist but also his friends and contemporaries, Lyell, Huxley, Hooker, and the climate of opinion in which their ideas originated and flourished. But to do this as clearly and painstakingly as she does is to make a significant contribution also to our understanding of the nature of Darwinism in its present form. Three points in particular stand out very clearly from her analysis.

FIRST, it is one of the major paradoxes of the history of science, that the Darwinian theory, speculative as it must be by the very nature of its subject-matter, has been held up as a model of simple Baconian induction through the patient accumulation of facts. Now no one denies that Darwin did patiently accumulate facts—but the facts he accumulated during the voyage of the *Beagle* did not at the time lead him to his species theory, and moreover, for many of the years during which the species theory was maturing in his mind he was in fact accumulating facts not directly about evolution but for his extended work on barnacles. No, the species theory, like most great forward steps in science, was a triumph of scientific *imagination* rather than of fact-collecting. Dr. Himmelfarb shows us plainly the two leaps of imagination through which Darwin's theory took shape: first in the sketch of 1837, where he speaks of *adaptation* perpetuated through *generation*, and secondly in the notes of 1842 and 1844, which follow his reading of Malthus on population, the text which by his own account suggested to him the concepts of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, the essential agents of *natural selection*. These steps once made, the new conceptual scheme took over, and the task of the *Origin* was to amplify the evidence in its support—evidence gleaned everyhow and everywhere—with the passion of genius, but not, as Dr. Himmelfarb remarks, by unusually accurate or systematic collection of data—and to assimilate within its all-enclosing scope whatever evidence might appear at first sight to conflict with it. The method is one of imagination, of extrapolation from a few facts to many more inferred realities seen in terms of the imagined scheme, and proof of these realities by the exclusion of other possibilities. Much the same method, Dr. Himmelfarb points out, was employed by Darwin in his work on the origin of coral reefs: the *subsidence* theory, which he held must be true of all such formations because as a conceptual scheme it was so clearly superior to the current alternative, the volcanic-crater theory. And the other alternative being excluded, this one is proved: "If, then," he writes, "the foundations of the many atolls were not uplifted into the required position, they must of necessity have subsided into it; and this at once solves every difficulty." This style of argument occurs again and again in the *Origin* also —and it is also very like Sir Gavin's argument about mutation, selection, and the horse.

This is not to suggest that Darwin or Darwinians, past or present, are "speculative" rather than "scientific" in their reasoning. Darwin himself certainly was not of a philosophical turn of mind; and he certainly believed sincerely, as his followers have done and do, that, as against such day-dreaming evolutionists as his grandfather or such systematising evolutionists as Herbert Spencer, he was patiently and empirically and critically pursuing facts and rejecting hypotheses not confirmed by facts. Yet what the genius of Darwin achieved, surely, was not to discover a host of new facts unknown to his predecessors that somehow added up to the further fact of evolution through natural selection; what he did was to see the facts in a new context—an imaginative context, the context of an idea, but an idea which seemed and seems to many modern minds peculiarly factual, an idea so convincing, so congenial, so satisfying that it feels like fact.*

Moreover, the circular structure which seems so oddly illogical to the outsider is just what, seen from the inside, most firmly supports the theory. "The genius—and the folly—of such a theory," Dr. Himmelfarb says of the *subsidence* theory, "is that it can explain anything and everything," and she shows how this applies to

* Mr. G. F. Seddon has written in the *Manchester Guardian* (July 17th): "It must have been at a fairly early age that I decided that Mr. Darwin had a better explanation of my existence than God. I forget whether his idea, once implanted, spread like a cancerous growth to oust the other belief, or whether it filled a vacuum left by loss of belief. However it happened, it seemed satisfyingly right, and it still does.

"Dr. Gertrude Himmelfarb in *Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution* knocks holes in his data and his logic, but even if she took the bottom out of him altogether (which she does not, nor set out to do) I should still find him satisfying even if not right."

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the argument of the *Origin* as well. This, again, it seems to me, is an important point if one wants to understand the modern as well as the 19th-century evolutionary literature. Difficulties such as the want of intermediaries in the fossil record or the problem of explaining on a chance-plus-elimination basis the slow cumulative evolution of organs like the eye, Darwin overcame sometimes by adding further hypotheses to support his original hypothesis, sometimes by urging us not to let our reason give in to a mere difficulty of imagination; and his very frankness in facing these difficulties as difficulties seemed to turn them from difficulties of the theory into parts of its proof. How could this be? Dr. Himmelfarb suggests that Darwin moves between two senses of explanation: to explain and to explain away. That may be what happens in effect, but the root of the matter, I suspect, lies deeper. It was the idea of natural selection that convinced the Victorians that evolution happened: so much so that for many people the idea of evolution *means* natural selection still. Now the chief direct evidence for evolution is the fossil record, but this, with its gaps, its explosive periods, its development of structures past any apparent adaptive end, is not in the main evidence for the very gradual, adaptation-controlled process envisaged by Darwin. Yet if it is evidence for evolution, and evolution *means* natural selection, then natural selection, by its convincing power, assimilates to itself the very evidence which would seem at first glance to tell against it. Thus Darwin's argument on the one hand *proves* that evolution happened by natural selection, and on the other hand, *conceiving* evolution as the result of natural selection, identifies all evidence for evolution with evidence for selection. It is not evolution as such but evolution by selection that defines the circle. *Difficulties* of selection theory, if they are proofs of evolution, must be in fact *proofs* of selection —since that is what, essentially, evolution is.

MODERN arguments work in much the same way. Thus for example the recent work of H. B. D. Kettlewell on industrial melanism has certainly confirmed the hypothesis that natural selection takes place in nature. This is the story of the black mutant of the common peppered moth which, as Kettlewell has shown with beautiful precision, increases in numbers in the vicinity of industrial centres and decreases, being more easily exposed to predators, in rural areas. Here, say the neo-Darwinians, is natural selection, that is, evolution, actually going on. But to this we may answer: selection, yes; the colour of moths or snails or mice is clearly controlled by visibility to predators; but "evolution"? Do these observations explain how in the first place there came to be any moths or snails or mice at all? By what right are we to extrapolate the pattern by which colour or other such superficial characters are governed to the origin of species, let alone of classes, orders, phyla of living organisms? But, say the neo-Darwinians again, natural selection is the only mechanism we observe in present-day nature. But again, if this were so, we should still have no right to say that the only mechanism we see at work now is the only one that has been at work in all the long past of the living world. Nor, for that matter, is it the only "mechanism." What of the mechanisms of development? Why not look at phylogeny as an ontogeny writ large, at the history of groups as expressing a fundamental rhythm still, in its intimacy, unknown to us, but analogous to the rhythm of individual development? Because the chance-variation/natural-selection schema, which through Darwin's work first convinced the world that evolution did in fact happen, still holds the mind entranced, absorbs into itself *all* evolutionary data, and at the same time rejects all data not so absorbable.

To say that neo-Darwinian thinking moves within a circle of concepts is not, in itself, however, to challenge its validity. For all comprehensive theories, all fundamental theories that the mind really dwells in—the corpuscular theory of the Newtonians, the relativity theory of 20th-century physicists—are similarly circular, since they rest in the last analysis on the self-satisfying character of their own premises. But in the case of neo-Darwinism the circle seems so narrow, and the detours taken to maintain it in the teeth of the evidence so circuitous and so many. Several years ago, for example, Professor C. H. Waddington gave a series of B.B.C. broadcasts called "Is the Problem of Evolution Solved?" in which he described some experiments that seemed at the time to shed some doubt on some aspects of the current theory; now his findings appear to have been happily assimilated and his title forgotten. He produced a character called "crossveinless" in fruit flies by subjection to high temperature for a short period of time. Breeding crossveinless flies, he got a higher proportion of flies which reacted in this way to the heat treatment; but after a time he got a race of flies that were crossveinless even *without* subjection to heat. This looked like a cousin, at least, of the geneticists' old enemy, inheritance of acquired characters. But no, genes and selection explain it all with ease. So P. M. Sheppard writes in his recent book *Natural Selection and Heredity*:

> In other words, selection had resulted in a character, usually only produced under excep-

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tional environmental conditions, being produced under normal conditions. Selection for those individuals that produced the character only with heat-shock would give a phenotypically flexible stock, whereas selection for those that produced it under both conditions would give a phenotypically fixed one. This result explains how some plants or animals can develop a gene-complex which produces a particular form fitted to a particular environment under most environmental conditions; that is to say, they are not phenotypically flexible, whereas in others the form is only produced under the appropriate environmental conditions (i.e. it is phenotypically flexible).

In short, the gene-complex, together with the theory of polygenic inheritance, can do anything. For each character is controlled, not, as used to be thought, by one gene, but by many genes, all balancing and buffering one another; and every change in the environment is balanced against the resulting balance. Thus in stable environments natural selection is conservative, preserving advantageous arrangements against disruption; but let the environment begin changing ever so slightly, natural selection causes—or rather *is*, by definition—the slight preponderance of a genotype slightly more favourable to the new conditions. Whatever might at first sight appear as evidence against the theory is assimilated by redefinition into the theory.

Finally, if evolution is axiomatically evolution by natural selection, it is at the same time evolution as progressive adaptation, since it is adaptive relationships that natural selection controls. This identity—the dependence of Darwinian and neo-Darwinian thought on the axiom that organic phenomena are explicable primarily in terms of adaptation, of the usefulness of particular structures and functions in particular niches in nature—is also illuminated, in its 19th-century background, by Dr. Himmelfarb's work. Firstly, as she points out, the sketch of 1837 argues plainly *from* adaptation as its basic datum. Secondly, "adaptation" is a matter of means and ends; and the reception of the *Origin* as Dr. Himmelfarb describes it shows how essential such means-end relations are to its argument. From the first the *Origin*, dispensing with a planner and with fixed ends for the processes of nature, seemed to many critics materialistic and mechanistic in its inspiration, but, saturated as it is with the conception of utility, fitness, and the like, appealed to others as the triumphant vindication of teleological thinking. For the in-between teleology of utilitarian thought is indeed the proper habitat, the natural niche, of Darwinism. Darwin, Shaw said, threw Paley's famous watch, the paradigm for the argument from design, into the ocean. It was not really, however, the watch he threw away, but the watchmaker. Darwinism is teleology decapitated; everything in nature is explained in terms of its purpose, but an unplanned purpose in which the organism is tool, tool user, and beneficiary all in one. And the artefact analogy is as basic to Darwinism, both old and new, as it is to natural theology: not only is the concept of natural selection grounded on the analogy with the great livestock breeders, but organisms themselves are conceived in Paleyan terms as contrivances, aggregates of characters and functions good for—what? For survival, that is, for going on being good for, going on being good for—and so an *ad infinitum*. For the *summum bonum*, like the maker, is dispensed with; yet the means-end relation, the notion of "this as useful for that," is fundamental still.

Moreover, despite the attempt of some of the leading neo-Darwinians to prove a selection theorem independently of the fact of adaptation, in purely mathematical terms, all this, again, is equally true of neo-Darwinism. For again and again in the course of their arguments the bare mathematics has to be swelled out to its full adaptive context in order to make of it a theory of evolution—though it may be drawn in again to statistical and mathematical form as scientific respectability demands. From this point of view by far the most honest and consistent statement of Darwinism in recent years is the Pelican on evolution by Maynard Smith. He starts, for example, with an account of Dice's experiments proving that owls take more mice against a contrasting than a similar background. This is to begin fairly and squarely with the old Darwinian idea of adaptation for survival, and from here he argues ingeniously but openly to fit a wide variety of evidence into a frankly utilitarian context. He uses, and cites others who use, modern statistical methods in the service of selection theory, but he does not pretend to *deduce* the equation of evolution with adaptive relationships from a mathematical base. Both the strength and the limitations of the theory appear with much less ambiguity in this form.

For it is precisely the insistence on the equation of life with adaptation that defines the limits of Darwinism, and it is doubt of the all-inclusiveness of adaptation as a concept definitive of life that motivates the most effective objections to the Darwinian synthesis. As between the Lamarckian and neo-Darwinian views of the origin of adaptations Darwinism appears to have won out; and though many critics of Darwinism still challenge it on the ground that the infinitely complex harmonies of mutual

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adaptations could not have been produced simply by a set of curious chances, the most fundamental opposition comes, it seems to me, from a more sweeping challenge. One may indeed ask whether all adaptations have arisen by Darwinian-Mendelian means; but one may also ask, as some eminent biologists do, whether evolution, on a large as well as on a small scale, is essentially a matter of adaptation at all. To such biologists—such as A. M. Dalcq of Brussels, O. Schindewolf of Tübingen, or A. Vandel of Toulouse—there appear in fact to be two divergent directions in the evolutionary story. There are, indeed, all the minute specialised divergences like those of the Galapagos finches which so fascinated Darwin; it is their story that is told in the *Origin* and elaborated by the selectionists to-day. But these are dead ends, last minutiæ of development; it is not from them that the great massive novelties of evolution could have sprung. For this, such dissenters feel, is the major evolutionary theme: great new inventions, new ideas of living, which arise with startling suddenness, proliferate in a variety of directions, yet persist with fundamental constancy—as in Darwinian terms they would have no reason in the world to do. Neither the origin and persistence of great new modes of life—photosynthesis, breathing, thinking—nor all the intricate and co-ordinated changes needed to support them, are explained or even made conceivable on the Darwinian view. And if one returns to read the *Origin* with these criticisms in mind, one finds, indeed, that for all the brilliance of its hypotheses piled on hypotheses, for all the splendid simplicity of the "mechanism" by which it "explains" so many and so varied phenomena, it simply is not about the origin of species, let alone of the great orders and classes and phyla, at all. Its argument moves in a different direction altogether, in the direction of minute specialised adaptations, which lead, unless to extinction, nowhere. And the same is true of the whole immense and infinitely ingenious mountain of work by present-day Darwinians: *c'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre!* That the colour of moths or snails or the bloom on the castor bean stem are "explained" by mutation and natural selection is very likely; but how from single-celled (and for that matter from inanimate) ancestors there came to be castor beans and moths and snails, and how from these there emerged llamas and hedgehogs and lions and apes—and men—that is a question which neo-Darwinian theory simply leaves unasked. With infinite ingenuity it elaborates the microscopic conditions for such macroscopic occurrences; but it provides no conceptual framework in terms of which they can be admitted to exist, let alone an "explanation" of their descent from "lower" forms.* In short, reflections on some of the problems of macroevolution may well lead to remarks like that of Professor Waddington, tucked away in the folds of his ingenious and "orthodox" argument on *The Strategy of the Genes*:

> . . . the unprejudiced student is likely to derive the impression that the failure of present theory to provide any plausible explanation for such occurrences has played a not unimportant part in weighting the scales against an acceptance of their real existence. It would certainly seem that in this field . . . the adequacy of modern theory may be doubted.

Moreover, evolutionists sceptical of the neo-Darwinian synthesis have themselves empirical evidence to support their doubts. For despite the neo-Darwinians' claims, two great biological disciplines, paleontology and embryology, appear to lend their chief weight against the selectionist dogma.

PALEONTOLOGY, once more, furnishes both the most direct evidence *for* the fact of evolution, and the most imposing evidence *against* the conception of evolution as a continuous, gradual progression of adaptive relationships. "Gaps in the fossil record" were a serious stumbling block in Darwin's time, and despite the discovery of many missing links—for example the striking completion of horse family history, or the discovery of the bird ancestor Archaeopteryx, with its reptilian features—they still persist. Moreover, they persist systematically: over and over, with suddenness termed "explosive," a bewildering variety of new types appear: this is true, notably, for example, of the origin of the major mammalian types. Thus, as G. G. Simpson's calculations of rates of evolution show, the bat's wing, if evolved by "normal" Mendelian mutation and selective pressure, would have had to begin developing well before the origin of the earth!†

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* Neo-Darwinians, of course, have heard this question; they say, "natural selection plus time will do the trick." But in what sense is this an answer? Natural selection as a mechanism observed in nature is a short-term business, and to extrapolate it to the whole of macroevolution needs great faith indeed; natural selection in the statistical sense of "differential reproduction," on the other hand, is simply a formulaic expression for the retrospective observation that evolution *has* happened, including all its aspects, those not conforming as well as those conforming to the micro-mutation-selection theory of its nature.

† This does not, however, we should add, impair Professor Simpson's confidence in the neo-Darwinian synthesis.

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Once new types appear, moreover, they frequently continue, so some paleontologists at least believe, in directions bearing no systematic relation to adaptive needs: in fact, they often exceed the demands of utility so grossly as to lead their species and genera and families to the common fate of life: that is, to death. Again, of course, if one is convinced in advance that all extinction *must* result not from any general "evolutionary trend," but from environmental change, one can interpret these cases too in accordance with selectionist principles: as T. S. Westoll has done, for instance, with the oyster ancestor Gryphaea, which looks as if it had secreted so much limestone that it left itself no room to live in its own shell. These over-specialised creatures, Westoll argues, were probably aged individuals of no evolutionary interest and their particular form of senility may have been associated with an actual reproductive advantage earlier in their individual lives: so that selection kept them going because of this advantage, which happened to carry with it what looks to us like a disadvantage; and in fact it may have been not this "disadvantage" but an environmental change (for which however we have no evidence) that carried them off. Thus we must infer both an unknown advantage and an unknown environmental change in order to avoid making the much more obvious inference that this kind of animal—this pattern of living—simply played itself out.

Mr Darwin and Friend c. 1867

But if the major rhythms of the history of life in the past seem to some students to resist compression into the Darwinian-Mendelian mould, these stubborn paleontological data agree, on the other hand, in the opinion of a number of biologists, with the evidence provided by our knowledge of development, that is, of the history of the living individual. There has been interesting speculation during the past thirty years, and even earlier—speculation based on increasing knowledge of comparative embryology—on the rôle of "heterochrony," or change in the temporal rhythms of development, in effecting evolutionary change. Instead of being tacked on, as evolutionists used to think, to the adult stage of early forms, it looks as if new developments may occur at any stage in the life cycle—the earlier, the more basic: and, in terms of the fossil record, the more sudden. Sometimes such early changes appear, indeed, to have consisted in a kind of inspired infantilism: the retention of a larval stage into adult life, permitting, as it were, rejuvenation of the race. This would explain the poverty of the fossil record at transitional stages, and the relatively sudden bursts of evolutionary energy that so frequently occur. The late Professor Garstang of Leeds, one of the great originators of this kind of evolutionary thinking, first published in 1894 his theory that the chordates may have developed from something like an echinoderm (starfish or sea urchin) larva: a freely swimming form, which, being dorsally exposed to light, might be stimulated to develop the dorsal nervous system characteristic of vertebrates. Or again, it has been pointed out that a human adult holds his head like an embryo dog: presumably, the failure to grow up in this respect enabled our ancestors to adopt an upright posture, and to achieve binocular vision. A host of arguments of this kind are substantiated and systematised in de Beer's book, to which I have already referred. To biologists like Vandel or Schindewolf, however, the view of evolution they suggest does not, as de Beer thinks, complement selection theory, but runs

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directly counter to it. Along with the growing evidence from experimental embryology (stressed, for example, by Dalcq or by the late R. S. Lillie of Chicago), conceptions like these suggest, not that life's history is a function of two variables, variation and selection, but that it hides a much richer complexity, a spontaneity, an inventiveness, an orderliness which eludes explanation in terms of such simple conceptions, however masterly the statistical edifice on which they are enthroned. Once more, if one *must* reduce the macroscopic to the microscopic, one can indeed say, there *must* have been "rate genes" to bring these changing rhythms about: but this is, once more, to postulate an unknown to explain away an uncomfortable aspect of the known.

YET, if all this is so, why is the neo-Darwinian theory so confidently affirmed? Partly, in the centennial year, as a mark of respect for the Newton of biology; but partly also, I believe, because neo-Darwinism, like Darwinism before it, is more than a scientific theory. It is a theory deeply embedded in a scientific faith: in the faith that science can and must explain all the phenomena of nature in terms of one hypothesis, and that an hypothesis of maximum simplicity, of maximum impersonality and objectivity. Relatively speaking, neo-Darwinism is logically simple: there are just two things happening, chance variations, and the elimination of the worst ones among them; and both these happenings are just plain facts, things that *do* or *don't* happen, *yes* or *no*. Nature is like a vast computing machine set up in binary digits; no mystery there. And—what man has not yet achieved—the machine is self-programmed: it began by chance, it continues automatically, its master plan itself creeping up on itself, so to speak, by means of its own automatism. Again, no mystery there. Like Strauss' miracles, mystery is banished; man is at home in a simple rational world.

As against this simplistic and reductive explanation, however, this cosmic behaviourism, the objections I have mentioned, such as the need to recognise the harmony of adaptations or the persistent structures and rhythms in phylogenetic development, are complicating and hence mystifying matters. They introduce a need for a more complex logic, permitting levels of emergence, for example; they introduce a need for frank retrospective assessment of the evolutionary story, and hence for personal appraisal of our own situation in evolution, as the outcome of evolution. Thus, in a recent paper, Professor Dalcq has warned us that, even should life be synthesised in the laboratory, it would be we ourselves, thinking and continuing products of life's long history, who had achieved this synthesis: and this fact would make an essential, logical, even a metaphysical difference to the import of the achievement.

From another perspective, David Lack, loyal Darwinian though he is, gives the game away. In the book I have already mentioned, he refers to Darwin's question: "Can the mind of man, descended, as I believe, from the lowest animal, be trusted when it draws such grand conclusions?" and he comments:

> Darwin's "horrid doubt" as to whether the convictions of man's evolved mind could be trusted applies as much to abstract truth as to ethics; and "evolutionary truth" is at least as suspect as evolutionary ethics. At this point, therefore, it would seem that the armies of science are in danger of destroying their own base. For the scientist must be able to trust the conclusions of his reasoning. Hence he cannot accept the theory that man's mind was evolved wholly by natural selection if this means, as it would appear to do, that the conclusions of the mind depend ultimately on their survival value and not their truth, thus making all scientific theories, including that of natural selection, untrustworthy.

Lack concludes from this that the old opposition of science and religion is still, and must remain, an "unresolved conflict." But I think one may conclude, on the contrary, that it is the conventional logic of science, and the view of mind implied in it, that needs revision. For, as Plato argued long ago about Protagonas' "man the measure," there is surely something wrong in a theory which, at its very root, invalidates itself.

To help us to understand, and to overcome in our own minds, this heritage of simplistic scientism is a signal service of Dr. Himmelfarb's book. From the reductive, mechanistic point of view, however, from the point of view of the faith of Darwinism, all these arguments, biological as well as historical and philosophical, are muddled and mystical, unscientific, and therefore incompetent objections, lying, even when they come from competent scientists rather than historians or philosophers, beyond the bounds of rational discourse.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Footnote to Mr. Crankshaw

"I JUST have a hunch," said Roosevelt in 1943, "that Stalin doesn't want anything but security for his country." In the years after the war the governments of the democratic nations of Western Europe gradually came to take a different view of the aims of Soviet policy, and this was the reason for their agreement to set up the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. Recently, however, there has been a widespread revival of the Rooseveltian hunch, and attempts have been made to tell the story of the cold war as primarily the result of a Western misunderstanding of the Kremlin's real intentions. One of the most persuasive advocates of this school of thought is Mr. Edward Crankshaw, who has expounded it in a series of three articles published in the *Observer* on the occasion of Khrushchev's journey to America. "Looking back," he writes in what may fairly be taken as the key sentence of his argument,

> it is easy enough to see that Stalin's moves from 1945 to 1947 were all concerned with one overriding objective, a limited objective: the killing of the potential threat of a *revanchist* Germany which might form a coalition with other Powers hostile to the Soviet Union.

At a time when so much may depend on what view is taken by the public in Europe and America of the origins and issues of the Soviet-Western conflict of the last fourteen years, it is worth while to study this claim rather carefully.

It may, indeed, be easy for Mr. Crankshaw to believe in the truth of what he writes, looking back from a year when West Germany is a member of NATO, and has an army, which there is a question of providing with nuclear weapons. But it is not so easy to believe it if one considers the historical facts of the period to which Mr. Crankshaw refers. When the Western and Soviet armies met in the middle of Germany in the spring of 1945, they were not only victorious over their common foe, but they achieved a victory that was total. All the German armed forces became prisoners of war; all German war material fell into the hands of the victors; all the territory of Germany was occupied; the German government ceased to exist. It had already been agreed among the Allies that Germany should be demilitarised and disarmed and that her war industries should be dismantled. What grounds then had the Soviet government in 1945, or the two years following, for thinking that Britain or the United States intended to build up Germany again as a strong military power with the capacity and will once more to attack the Soviet Union? Mr. Crankshaw, conceding that during the war the Russians kept their co-operation and contact with their allies to an unavoidable minimum, explains this as due to Stalin's fear that Britain and America would at some stage of the war do a deal with Hitler at his expense. Given the background of past relations between the Soviet Union and the Western democracies, the memories of Munich and the Nazi-Soviet Pact, it cannot be said that such a suspicion was altogether an irrational one, even without a Marxist-Leninist conception of how imperialist governments must be expected to behave. Nevertheless, Britain and America did fight the war through to the end without making any deal either with Hitler or with German generals, and by May 1945 there was nothing left of German power with which a deal might be done.

Now surely, if Stalin's policy was based, as Mr. Crankshaw thinks, simply on the purpose of "killing the potential threat of a *revanchist* Germany," this was the moment to negotiate firm agreements with the Western powers to keep Germany permanently disarmed and maintain an alliance which had stood the test of four years of war. But from the outset the Russians not only made a unified Allied economic policy for Germany impossible by sealing off their own zone economically; they also challenged the Western powers politically by working for the establishment of Communist supremacy not only in their own zone, but in the Western zones as well. Having used their position as occupying power in their own zone to compel the German Social Democrats to merge with the Communists in the Socialist Unity Party (under Communist leadership), the Russians in the summer of 1946 launched a high-powered campaign of agitation in the Western zones, directed and subsidised from the Soviet zone, at a time when political parties as yet hardly existed in the Western zones, because it was the policy of the Western powers not to encourage party political activities until "de-Nazification" had been carried out. For a while the Western occupation authorities tolerated the invasion of Communist organisers from the Soviet zone, but finally they put a stop to it, and this became a major Russian grievance, although no non-Communist leaders from the West were allowed to enter the Soviet zone, and the leader of the German Social Democrats, Dr. Kurt Schumacher, who had spent eight years

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in Nazi concentration camps, was described on the Soviet radio as a Fascist and "a puppet Hitler under Anglo-Saxon influence."

Soviet propaganda to the German people during this period was not only directed towards support of the political activity of the German Communists; it was also grossly anti-British and anti-American. When the Allies took over administrative control of their zones of Germany, it was agreed that the German Press should not be allowed to print news or comment detrimental to any of the occupying powers, and the Western powers did their best to enforce this—for example, not a word could be published about the atrocities committed by the Red Army, although the Western zones were full of refugees who had been witnesses. But in the German Press of the Soviet zone the authorities permitted, and indeed organised, from the outset a propaganda which vilified the British and Americans and represented the Soviet Union as the only true friend of Germany. Britain and the United States were pictured as the imperialists who had replaced Hitler as the danger to the peace of the world. In 1947 a Russian film was shown in East Germany giving items of British and American troops and warships with the caption *"Recognise Your Enemy!"* The British and American occupation authorities were extremely reluctant to retaliate in kind; when counter-propaganda measures were suggested to General Robertson, he replied: "We have no wish to compete for the rôle of champion of the new Germany."

All this was going on when there was not a single armed German soldier left in Germany and when there was not the slightest indication for any rational observer of an Anglo-American intention to re-arm Germany. The first German military formations to appear after the war were the Communist-indoctrinated units attached to the East German *Volkspolizei*; they were equipped with tanks and artillery as well as small arms, and their existence meant that, whenever the occupation régime came to an end, the Communists would be able to take over the whole of Germany unless comparable opposing forces had been created in the Western zones. If both parts of Germany have now been re-armed, it was definitely the Russians who started it.

From the autumn of 1945 onwards the American Government pressed on Russia proposals for a four-Power treaty guaranteeing the demilitarisation of the German State for twenty-five years—later the term was raised to forty years. In view of the isolationist tradition of American foreign policy, it was a remarkable thing that the United States should be ready thus to commit herself to a task of supervision in Central Europe. The draft treaty provided for inspection after the end of the occupation period and sanctions to be taken in the event of violation.

If Stalin's aims had been what Mr. Crankshaw says they were, this was surely the way to assure the security of the Soviet Union for a generation. But Moscow turned down the offer, and it was explained that it was an illusion to suppose that peace could be maintained merely by disarming Germany without "a radical reconstruction of the public life and State system of Germany on a broad democratic basis." In the context of Soviet action and propaganda at that time, this meant that Germany as a whole must become a Communist-controlled "people's democracy" like Poland, Hungary, or Rumania. Stalin in fact was not interested in treaties for keeping Germany disarmed; he demanded a Communist Germany and nothing less would satisfy him.

Mr. Crankshaw will not admit that Stalin's policy was influenced by the aim of extending Communist rule as an unlimited objective set by Marxist-Leninist ideology, to be achieved where and when opportunity offers. According to him, Stalin only installed Communist governments in East European countries and in the Soviet zone of Germany because he considered this was the only way to have friendly neighbours and ensure the security of the Soviet Union against a German *revanche*. It may in any case be thought that if the extension of Communist rule is the only way of achieving security for Russia, the contrast between the quest for security and the will to spread Communism tends to become a distinction without a difference. But there is evidence from Stalin's own writings that he originally regarded the extension of Communism abroad as part of his political duty. "The development and support of the revolution in other countries," he wrote in *Problems of Leninism*, "is an essential task of the victorious revolution in one country." Mr. Crankshaw appears to hold that Stalin no longer believed this in 1945, and that his actions then had nothing to do with the Leninist idea of "world revolution." But there was in internal Soviet propaganda just after the end of the "Great Patriotic War" an intense revival of Marxist-Leninist indoctrination and of the old revolutionary language, as if to restore the Communist party's right to govern and to compensate for the backsliding of the war years when the cause of national defence had had priority over ideology. This corresponded internally to the support given to Communists abroad, and Stalin could claim that by what he had done for Communism in Europe he was

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indeed Lenin's successor. In a letter to Tito at the time of the quarrel in 1948 he took credit for "creating the conditions which were necessary for the Communist party of Yugoslavia to achieve power," and added: "Unfortunately the Soviet army did not and could not render such assistance to the French and Italian Communist parties." But even without France and Italy it must be admitted that the Communist haul in Europe was a big one.

According to Mr. Crankshaw

> one of the main reasons why the West was unable to appreciate the elementary and limited nature of Stalin's offensive-defensive strategy was the belated re-discovery of the writings of Lenin and the early pronouncements of Stalin about the strategy of world revolution.

Nevertheless, it seems that Stalin was, in Mr. Crankshaw's opinion, "confused" by the "half-baked dreams of a long-dead revolutionary of genius." He was "the prisoner of an outdated ideology" and his "vision of reality was twisted out of the true . . . by Leninist distortions which conditioned all his thinking." So he was a bit of a Marxist-Leninist after all! However, he is now dead, and Russia is ruled by a decent, sensible, practical man who has no use for any of these "half-baked dreams." We can only hope that he may be persuaded to desist from repeating the attempt of his predecessor to force the Western powers to surrender West Berlin. But if we are asked to believe that Stalin in the years immediately after the war had no purpose in his actions in Europe except to safeguard Soviet territory against a revival of German militarism, it is relevant to recall that he was offered a treaty which would have kept Germany disarmed well through 1984.

G. F. Hudson

Ballet Theatre

WHEN Jerome Robbins' astonishing *Ballets: U.S.A.* first opened here, at the Edinburgh Festival, the stage was bare and the dancers wore practice clothes, because their sets and costumes had gone to the bottom of the Mediterranean. With all respect to the designers, who included Ben Shahn and Saul Steinberg, the accident was anything but disastrous: if ever a ballet company thrived on lost illusions, this was it. To gauge the distance that Mr. Robbins has put between himself and traditional ballet one had only to imagine the total disenchantment of "Swan Lake" without its swan *tutus* and lake backcloth. The ballet that we call classical relies on technique and mystique; the ballet of Mr. Robbins, which cheerfully defies classification, relies on verve and nerve.

He said blandly in London that he had never dreamt that his company would have such shock-value. Wittingly or not, his four short ballets made havoc of the local rules. To begin with, they were based respectively on the challenging assumptions (1) that dance can manage without music; (2) that "Afternoon of a Faun" can be re-vamped without heresy; (3) that jazz is a serious kind of music; and (4) that Chopin is funny. What was more, Robbins' choreography used a terse vernacular that made the ornate periods of classical ballet seem like Walter Pater. Cumulatively, the programme amounted to a revolution, breaching the unscalable wall between Covent Garden and Shaftesbury Avenue and leaving audiences in a state of unsettled euphoria.

The first ballet, "Moves," danced without a sound except the squeak of ballet-shoes, opened the programme unpromisingly enough. One recalled, damply, a recent short film in which Martha Graham gave what appeared to be a parody of herself by Beatrice Lillie, dancing gravely in perfect silence with a large nail-like weapon stuck through a bun on the top of her head. But one quickly capitulated. As a single, stringent exercise—and Robbins has no intention of pressing it any further—"Moves" was triumphantly convincing. This was to accompanied ballet as drawing is to painting: the linear quality of dance, perfectly realised by a company whose lack of star-consciousness Stanislavsky would have approved. The movement seemed to pass by infection, to be a matter of suggestibility, like yawning, which is the sort of commonplace of behaviour that Robbins can draw upon. For people alienated by the impenetrable *mores* of classical ballet, the breathtaking thing about these dancers was that they reacted like human beings: they lounged, stretched, clicked their fingers to a beat, stood on one hip. Robbins uses the slang of movement, a sharp, cool language that abhors sentimentality, yet is often genuinely romantic.

His new version of "Afternoon of a Faun" was an idyllic modernisation of the original. Instead of the antique world, the setting was a ballet practice room, flooded with that sharp Manhattan light that looks like a Chirico painting. Instead of a faun and nymphs, a Negro and a fair-haired ballerina were doing exercises into the mirror that formed the fourth wall, caught in the rapt narcissism of dancers at practice. The scene was 1959, but the mood remained that of Nijinsky's famous original. (I was suddenly

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reminded that Robbins had once wanted to do a new version of "Le Sacre du Printemps" for Covent Garden, and had been refused for fear of offending the shade of Diaghilev.)

The masterpiece of the programme was "N.Y. Export: Op. Jazz," which distilled into pure dance the sociology of *West Side Story*. Controlled, expert, wary, rocketing between wild energy and challenging indolence, this was the teen-ager's world: if ever the motivation of dance could be explained, Robbins did it here. (Not everyone shared this view. One critic wrote that "despite its pretentious title it is only a high-spirited romp among teen-agers afflicted with some form of St. Vitus' Dance. . . .")

And finally there was "The Concert," a hilarious and lyrical piece about day-dreamers at a Chopin recital who were sent into martial fantasies by the Revolutionary Study, and floated rapturously under umbrellas in response to the persistent inclemency of the Raindrop Prelude. Periodically the music-lovers were carted about by male dancers in cloth caps, like removal men, innocently reflecting the classical ballerina's impulsive habit of needing to be carried. Choreographers had been funny before, but never managed this instant synthesis of clowning, satire, and poetry.

The audience emerged reeling, mostly with delight, many with envy, a few with fury. ("Ugly"—"No technique"—"It may be theatre, but it's not ballet"—and even, from a clergyman, "Surely the Americans have a soul *somewhere!*") On the whole, theatre people were totally in favour, won by a balletic style that so flagrantly ignored the class-distinction in England between pure ballet and the musical. The choreographers themselves, more seriously appreciative, were also more guarded about Robbins' influence.

"A wonderful outcome of the American way of life," Frederick Ashton commented when I asked him. "Martha Graham was always so highbrow, but Robbins reaches everybody. I hesitate to use the word genius because there are so many geniuses I don't like, but. . . . Oh, a marvellous tonic. Not outstanding ballet dancers, but wonderful in the way they could go from one convention to another. But I hope people won't use them as a stick to beat us with. It would be terribly phoney if we copied them. Look at 'The Crooked Mile'—gin and water. I personally find it embarrassing when I see English people getting jazzy. We're lyricists, like our poets. . . ."

When the ballets met with resistance, it often hinged on this question of jazziness. As so often happens when the English are forced into comparisons with Americans, "brash" became a key word. Two reviewers used chromium plating as an image, and so did Ashton in talking to me about the relevance of this kind of dance to the Royal Ballet: "There are some things that it's difficult to do in opera houses. They have a terrible effect. It would be like using chromium in an old country seat." After recognising Robbins' influence, he retreated engagingly: "It's not for me to do this sort of ballet anyway. I'm an old master. But I'm sure that young choreographers will be tremendously affected, even if subconsciously."

John Cranko had obviously been deeply stirred when I talked to him, though he had the same reservation about Robbins' essential American-ness. "Mechanically it was one of the most exciting things I've ever seen—we've done everything we can with jigging with the body, but Robbins has discovered this terrific use of dynamics, stressing the *quality* of a movement. His imagery in ballet is enormous, and I think he's stripped a tremendous lot of 19th-century conventions away. But we can't do it ourselves until we've got an Ellington or a Basie. Until somebody solves the problem of an English idiom we're going to be up a gum-tree. . . ."

To a layman, the impressive thing about Jerome Robbins' ballets is not only the use of jazz, but the whole attitude of refusing to be pigeon-holed. In Cranko's words: "The wonderful thing is that these ballets work on a poetic *and* on a popular plane." Significantly, the young members of his company have had a hybrid training—not only in ballet, but also in Indian dance, Spanish, Chinese, Negro; and they have all worked on Broadway. This rude experience of show-business never taints their English equivalents. As Elizabeth Seal, now in *Irma la Douce*, said briskly: "If you took a dancer from the Royal Ballet and asked her to do *The Pajama Game* she'd have hysterics."

One of the obvious causes of this difference is that in New York George Balanchine has only recently been able to offer dancers long-term employment and so they have been forced to be interested in musicals, whereas in London they naturally prefer the security of working with our permanent companies. But it is also a question of attitude. Just as Americans are less class-conscious than we are, they are also less classification-conscious: the cross-breeding between ballet and theatre, Russian dance and jazz, is something that Robbins takes for granted. "Our background is a mixture of ballet conventions. If we had to kick over anything, I suppose it was the constant emphasis that I grew up in on 'Russian' ballet. I put it very much in quotes. There was never any difficulty about crossing the line between musicals and pure ballets. Balanchine did musicals back in 1935." The attitude is an equivalent of the

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liberalism in music that produced Leonard Bernstein, simultaneously a Broadway composer and the N.Y. Philharmonic's conductor, and that allowed the marriage between operetta and jazz from which the American musical was born.

Robbins' great leap forward is that he sees ballet as a popular theatrical entertainment. It is a view that makes our own look ferociously segregationalist, though the change is coming: one gets signs of it in John Cranko's own experiments, for instance, and in Kenneth Macmillan's "The Burrow." But at the moment more progress is being made from the opposite direction, from the theatre, where Joan Littlewood is razing the distinctions between the drama and the musical with triumphant irregularities like *The Hostage*.

Penelope Gilliatt

Pleasures of Rhetoric

MR. ELIOT'S famous aphorism, ranking *Coriolanus* alongside *Antony and Cleopatra* among the supremely successful plays, still seems to me as baffling as ever. Even this brilliantly clear and confident production at Stratford left an uncertainty.

Are there any conditions of production, any styles in acting, which could make a whole audience at this time feel involved with the protagonists and carried along with their story? This is after all the test that cannot be avoided at Stratford. One may be led into a sense of involvement by the language, and the memory of the language may remain when the tension with which it was associated in the theatre has gone. But one cannot watch a political play as if it were pageant or literary spectacle. The difficulty here is that one still wrongly expects a tragedy and the poetry of tragedy; in fact there are none of the elements of tragedy or of the poetry of tragedy. *Coriolanus*, with its broken lines and half verse, is an exercise in rhetoric and the mockery of rhetoric. "His heart's his mouth: what his breast forges, that his tongue must vent." It is pointless to look through Coriolanus' speeches, as through the speeches of Lear or Hamlet or Macbeth, to the nature that is revealed in them: everything that can be thought of him has already appeared in his words. He lives in careless self-expression; he simply declaims and interrupts himself with an impatient phrase. One has to forget the familiar idea of character as something revealed gradually in an unfolding story. The political conflict also lies on the surface; the two principles of Renaissance politics, the overweening virtue of the complete individual and the necessary trickery of patriotic statecraft, are fully declared. They do not need to be further emphasised in the acting. Sir Laurence Olivier played a little with his speeches, adding humour and character to them, particularly in his great scene with the tribunes. One could almost feel the audience demanding humour and character, restless with only a great voice boasting of its greatness, as if this were an operatic pleasure no longer tolerable in drama. Dame Edith Evans subtly transposed Volumnia into a lower key, as a great lady, secure and quiet in her position, who does not need to shout and hiss and struggle like a Greek. She thereby achieved a unity of tone with some loss of the true effect of sudden, final denunciation.

The pleasures of rhetoric, of characters who listen to themselves and find their life and their doom in their own quick phrase-making, have returned and won some recognition in the theatre in the last ten years. Therefore this was at least an intelligible Coriolanus, angry, restless, contemptuous of political words, finding dignity in a gesture rather than in an achievement, since in politics there can be no lasting achievements. The mood, and the style of production that can express it, are certainly nearer to us than they were to Bradley. If there had been less humour, less illustration of character in mannerism, the political bitterness might perhaps have been still more directly conveyed.

Stuart Hampshire

D.D.R. in Mayfair

TO CREATE a literature with even simulation of life must be a harder task in the D.D.R.—Communist East Germany—than in any other satellite State. The contrast is not only with Poland of the last three years which by comparison enjoys an almost fantastic literary freedom. Even in Bulgaria and Rumania, a writer of sensitivity can at least attempt to escape into the national lyrical traditions of the past. Perhaps he can do so even in Hungary. But the D.D.R. has no tradition—only *Impermanenzgefühl*, a sense of impermanence. It is a mere segment cut off artificially from the interchange of German-language culture of Western Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. It is also a state where not only the man-in-the-street but every other official may in his heart be against the régime. That in this situation it is not possible to create any "literary life" was fully

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demonstrated by the recent D.D.R. book exhibition in London.

When I had last seen East German book displays in the Stalinallee in East Berlin, their censored contents had seemed antiquated even among those surroundings of glazed-tile Stalinist architecture. Brought to the heart of Mayfair, they seemed even odder. True, it was no longer a matter of that shoddy production and crude design which some time back gave to most German books "from the East" an air of utter weariness. Though still far from the best West German and Swiss levels and probably also below German pre-war standards, book production in the D.D.R. has been quite noticeably improved. The volumes selected for show (at the premises of the National Book League in Albemarle Street) were mostly on good paper and among the editions of classics, art, and travel books they included some pleasing covers. But this outward normality made the whole exhibition an even more pointless gesture: at what students of German life and letters in London could this demonstration of Communist censorship and mass exclusion of Western thought be conceivably directed? It seemed appropriate that on the third afternoon of the exhibition I should have found myself alone in the echoing showroom, along with the director of the exhibition and his assistant. Both were from Leipzig, in the publishing business, and in conversation friendly enough. Perhaps one need just take it that to-day all persons connected with books behind the Iron Curtain have a desperate thirst for contacts with the West, and leave it at that.

At the same time, the exhibition also showed that the thaw had definitely not yet come to East Germany. In fact, as I browsed through the books, it was interesting to note how precisely reading matter for East Germans was geared not only to Moscow's general Cold War line but to the most recent turns. One could see this even on such a complex theme as "the Jewish question." For example, there was no *Diary of Anne Frank* but instead a "Diary for Anne Frank." The popularity of Anne Frank in West Germany had evidently been thought important enough to be countered, but the Communist volume proceeded from the merest mention of Anne to an attack upon West German membership in NATO. In a book alongside, called *Heroes of the Ghetto*, the story of the Nazi extermination of the Warsaw Jews and of the forlorn struggle of the few in the Ghetto was told fairly straight. As victims, Jews were evidently admissible. But not as heroes of international Communism, certainly not since the shift of Soviet Middle East policy in 1951. I found that in a book on the Rosenberg case called *Julius and Ethel*, direct mention of the fact that the Rosenbergs were Jews was neatly excised. A novel not far away, called *Rehearsal in Vienna*, revealed another facet of the line. The villain of the tale was a speculator called "Mister Goldstein," who was made to talk in that same distorted German given to Jewish characters in German novels put out during the Goebbels era. As a piece of pandering to residual anti-semitism in East Germany, this was in order. The slip had been to bring the book to London where it could be spotted.

ANOTHER INTERESTING SLIP. A significant contrast to the call for *"Peace"* proclaimed from every corner of the exhibition was presented by the publishing catalogue of the East German Ministry of Defence. This brochure not only listed two hundred titles ranging in subject from nuclear war to marching songs, but its puffs were still written in that sentimental and rather dreadful, special *Soldatendeutsch* which I had elsewhere not met for years. An interesting, peaceful title was *The Army Needs Strong and Brave Soldiers* (240 pages, July 1959) and such other unmilitaristic literature as *Uniform and Tradition* by Oscar Bluth, or *How Officers Can Develop a Strong Will* by I. E. Budowski. Or again, there was *The Night as the Bold Soldier's Ally*, not to speak of *The Soldier's Honour* by Gerhard Zazworka. Less obtrusively written up were *The Criminal Law Concerning Offences Against Military Discipline* and *Synthetic Poisons* (a treatise about "imperialist warmongering chemical warfare"). None of these books was displayed, and I noticed that after the first day this catalogue had also disappeared.

The impression of a Moscow propaganda directive kept continuously up-to-date was, in fact, reflected by the entire exhibition. I asked the director why Djilas' *New Class* was permitted in Poland but not in East Germany, and his answer was that the distinction was not logical but that "in a divided country" one had to be stricter in not admitting dangerous thoughts. Within the expected emphasis on science, the theme of "Russian world supremacy in nuclear physics and space rocketry" was expounded by an array of German and Russian writers all the way down to science fiction and children's books. (Something about the illustrations and the boastful tone aroused odd memories of similar books of a half-century ago, glorifying the British Empire.) In the largest section of the exhibition, entitled "Belles Lettres," the system of censorship and exclusion seemed not only bigoted but strangely antiquated—like the product of a narrow, collective Communist mind that had stopped thinking some time in the 'thirties and upon which the dust had since settled.

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The East German readers were still being asked to believe that the only permitted tradition of "literature and humanism" led from solid editions of the German classics via those of a few anti-Fascist writers of the Weimar Republic (Heinrich Mann, Lion Feuchtwanger, Arnold Zweig) straight to the Soviet hack writers of to-day, with all else consigned to oblivion. On the English table one could, similarly, see editions of classics (Defoe, Dickens, Thackeray) and then a straight jump to isolated works by a few Left Wing writers like Basil Davidson and D. N. Pritt. These are, of course, the familiar methods of Nazi and Communist *Kulturpolitik*. What did take me aback, however, was the level of the new East German Communist novels produced to order which was of a banality impossible to convey without extensive quotation. The style was not so much that of women's magazines of to-day as of those of thirty or forty years ago, as if here, too, all clocks had stopped striking decades ago.

As I left the D.D.R. exhibition (emerging into Piccadilly and buying a newspaper to see how Mr. K. was getting on in the United States) I found myself wondering how long such a system of censorship could endure. As long as Berlin remained an open door to the West, a censor could only remain largely ineffective: too much "fresh air" comes in, too many persons go out. Yet my optimism went further: the more I thought of this Communist exhibition with its strange mélange of peace and war books, of classics and sub-standard novels, the stronger my feeling that something above all so out-dated could not last. Even though Mr. K. might not yet be prepared to yield an inch about Soviet censorship, this remained a basic "cultural contradiction" of Communism. To "catch up" with the West might mean overtaking (or taking over) much that was disaffecting. Moscow students, as we know, trade "black tapes" of hot jazz recorded from B.B.C. and Voice of America broadcasts, and can quote the poetry in *Zhivago*. After all, with rising material standards, Russian (and East German) life has become already visibly more "Western" in terms of consumer goods, television, and youthful crazes. The indications are surely equally that in the *rapprochement* to come, the advantage in an exchange of *living* culture will continue to lie with the West. Alas, preoccupied as we often are with our mass-cultural problems of *Admass*, it remains a truth we usually forget.

T. R. Fyvel

Fairlie, the Establishment, and the B.B.C.

It appears from his remarks about the B.B.C., published in the August Encounter, that Mr. Henry Fairlie is saddened by the misunderstandings of the concept of "The Establishment" that have been put about by "the . . . professional publicists and vulgarisers who to-day imagine that a little ill-will entitles them to comment on public affairs." "It is a pity, one sometimes feels, that it was ever popularised," he sighs, meaning presumably that he feels it is a pity that he ever popularised it. It is all the greater pity, then, that despite what one must suppose to be his best efforts to avoid vulgarisation and ill-will, his latest exposition of the idea leaves it in a sadder state of rhetorical confusion than it was before.

It was a mistake, he tells us, to identify the Establishment with the wielders of power:

> The idea of the Establishment is concerned less with the actual exercise of power than with the established bodies of prevailing opinion which powerfully, and not always openly, influence its exercise.

Influence, then, rather than power? But influence on whom? Fairlie does not mean, as one might have supposed, that the Establishment influences those in power. On the contrary, a large proportion of his remarks on Lord Reith (which constitute a large proportion of his remarks on the B.B.C., the supposed voice of the Establishment) are devoted to examples of Reith's cravenly succumbing to Government pressure, i.e., of his being influenced by those in power and not influencing them. Again, Fairlie says, the Establishment, unlike the sorts of bodies that seek to influence those in power, represents no particular interest:

> The one significant fact about the Establishment is that it represents nothing in national life . . . has its roots in no class and no interest . . . its claim to disinterestedness may, in this sense, be readily accepted.

On whom, then, and to what purpose, does the Establishment exercise its influence? Seemingly, on public opinion, to induce in it respect for conformity, mediocrity, and established authority.

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Longfellow

(and short ones, too)

Tell it now in joyful numbers,
Life with Guinness is more gay
Poets, peasants, peers and plumbers
Drink five million every day.

YES, FIVE MILLION
GUINNESS
ARE ENJOYED
EVERY DAY

G.E.3253.B

But for *whose* authority? Not for that of the Establishment, which has already been said to have no authority. So presumably what the Establishment encourages is respect for those in power, whoever they may be. But no: this is contradicted by the example of the campaign against commercial television, on which Fairlie lays great weight as an example of a campaign by the Establishment *against* those who were in power. Moreover, it is not even certain that it is public opinion that the Establishment is supposed to influence—half the time it is represented rather as being influenced by it. On this point it looks as though even Fairlie recognised a dilemma, but bravely threw himself on to both its horns:

> ... the precondition of the Establishment's survival is that it should be able easily to shift its ground with prevailing opinion and so control it.

So we still do not know what the Establishment is supposed to be up to. Moreover, the only example given of the Establishment's influence on the public is the B.B.C.; and since Fairlie says that the B.B.C. is the *voice* of the Establishment, it is not even clear whether we have been told who speaks with this voice, i.e., who the Establishment *are* (except, of course, for the Warden of All Souls).

THE SOURCE OF THESE MUDDLES is Fairlie's confusion between two quite different things. On the one hand, there certainly exists in Britain a number of persons, many of them known to each other and sometimes educated together, who exercise considerable power and influence of the kind that is not open to direct public inspection and control. The same is true of practically any other country that has not undergone a recent and profound political upheaval; the only peculiarity of this group in Britain is the degree of its stability, unobtrusiveness, and complacency. This is the Establishment in the sense in which Fairlie says he does not mean the term. It does exist; its nature is not unconnected with the public school system; it should be, can be, and to a limited extent is being, changed.

On the other hand, there is something else: a certain low-toned quality of British intellectual, cultural, and political life, a lack of genuine debate and facing of real issues, a foggy acceptance of mediocrity. This, presumably, is what Fairlie *is* talking about as the Establishment. No wonder he gets into difficulties in identifying it, since this second thing is not a thing at all, but—as Bertrand Russell once said about electricity—"a way in which things behave." Moreover—and this is the important point—it is not peculiarly connected with the Establishment in the first sense at all. It is something far more pervasive, a mode of approaching life which appears all over the place, which is not just the product of a group of stuffy and important people. Only the old demagogue's axiom, that if there is something wrong there is somebody prominent to blame, can make one think otherwise.

Fairlie, however, does think otherwise, or affects to. Hence the suggestion, which runs through his

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article, that the Press and (by implication) I.T.V. are, unlike the B.B.C., free of the stifling and trivialising mediocrity in which the Establishment is supposed to have a vested interest. Fairlie is indeed right in pointing to such things in the B.B.C. as the adeptness of its chairmen of discussions in muffling uncomfortable disagreements. Many such charges will stick. The question, however, is why the B.B.C. is like this. It is like this partly for special reasons—its peculiar semi-official position and the anonymous caution which that induces. But it is like this also because it shares in its own way in something much wider, which appears, in different ways, in other things to which Fairlie unfavourably compares the B.B.C.

It is worth looking rather more closely at one or two of Fairlie's unfavourable comparisons, which are supported by a good deal of sophistry and some falsehood. To take an example of the latter, he says that the B.B.C. allows fair play in politics only

> when the two front benches are agreed about a policy, and then only to the front bench point of view.

But the most bitter division between the parties in recent years was over Suez, when the B.B.C. (against, it was rumoured at the time, the wishes of the Government) gave Gaitskell the air to put the anti-Suez case.

More seriously misleading is the kind of thing that Fairlie says in a very tricky passage about the B.B.C.'s news bulletins. His argument here is that the B.B.C.'s news, by its shortness, separation of events from their context and antecedents, concentration on the activities of the powerful, and, worst of all, its calm air of objectivity, is in fact

> as guilty of a gross distortion of fact and truth as any politically biased newspaper, and almost certainly more consistently so.

Of these points, the pseudo-objectivity is the most serious:

> It is far preferable that the fears and appetites of trade unionists and stockbrokers should be plainly represented and plainly recognisable in the *Daily Herald* or the *Daily Telegraph* than that they should be given respectability and innocence by a B.B.C. news editor and a B.B.C. announcer.

But how represented, and to whom recognisable? The suggestion of this passage is that because a newspaper *represents* a particular interest, it somehow reveals to its readers the working of this interest, and hence the real grimy struggles of politics, in a way that the smooth surface of B.B.C. reporting does not. This suggestion is really absurd. To suppose that because the *Daily Express*—to take a different case—is grinding Lord Beaverbrook's axes, it thereby lets its average reader in on Lord Beaverbrook's axe-grinding, is seriously to underestimate the skill of Beaverbrook's employees.

It is just as implausible to argue that the B.B.C. *differs* from the Press in presenting events in a disconnected and incomprehensibly trivialised form: the most striking feature of nine-tenths of the Press in this country is just that every important, and unimportant, event is presented as a sensational bolt from the blue: compare the popular form of headline "NOW—". On the matter of brevity, lastly, it is comic, and significant, that Fairlie makes his point by saying that the fifteen minutes of a B.B.C. news bulletin represents less than two columns of the *Times*. All this shows, presumably, is that some voices of the Establishment are more long-winded than others. The point in all this is not that the B.B.C. is better than the Press; and it is worth remembering that the B.B.C. is not supposed by anyone to be a *substitute* for the papers. The point is that if the B.B.C. has the faults Fairlie attributes to it in these respects, it shares them with the Press. Very little of the popular Press is devoted to any serious discussion of issues at all; and of the five "serious" national daily and Sunday papers, two at least, and perhaps a third (the *Daily Telegraph*) express exactly that tone of muffled complacency which enemies of the Establishment should find objectionable.

Nor does the general level of I.T.V. do anything to encourage vigorous and serious criticism of anything. At the end of his article Fairlie offers the thought:

> The Establishment knows that a population with independent tastes, even if its tastes are only Tommy Steele and Terry Dene, is a population which is capable of feeling, thinking, and perhaps therefore even acting, independently of it.

This is sentimental self-indulgence. Let us not despise popular taste, as Reith undoubtedly did; but let us not kid ourselves that Rock is the road to self-criticism and political awakening.

The truth is that large areas of life in Britain are permeated by mediocrity and the refusal to face genuine issues. Influential figures undoubtedly share, in their own refinedly complacent way, these characteristics, but they are not the cause of them. To suppose that they are, that the B.B.C. uniquely purveys their influence, and that the Press and I.T.V. are the guardians of live-mindedness and honesty, is gratifyingly simple but dangerously untrue.

Bernard Williams

[*Other comment in "Letters", p. 84*]

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Coriolanus of the Intellectuals

By C. P. Snow

THIS book of Barzun's* has made a real impact over here. Which is excellent news: partly because he has as much to teach us as his own countrymen, and partly because he is a most interesting figure in his own right. The Americans have realised this latter fact, with a mixture of irritation, respect, and envy, for a considerable time past. The effect of Barzun's thinking in the United States is not to be disentangled from the effect of his personality. It is time we, too, learned something about him. He is Provost and Dean of Faculties of Columbia University; he is a historian by profession, and also an accomplished musicologist; his book on Brahms, so I am told by musicians, is very highly thought of; he is a close associate of Lionel Trilling's and they, together with Auden, preside over a highbrow book-club. All that sounds praiseworthy and respectable. It sounds the representative career of a man who, in this country, would be the master of a college, chairman of royal commissions, and a star performer on the TV Brains Trust. All of which Barzun, transferred to this side, would inevitably be. But it doesn't quite explain why he is the Coriolanus of U.S. intellectual life. Yet, at least to a visitor as one goes round literary parties and campuses, the opinion-forming fringe of the United States, so he appears to be.

He is brave, arrogant, clever, politely rude, intransigent. It isn't so much that he doesn't suffer fools gladly: it depends on the kind of fools. He has a conviction that a large percentage of "intellectuals" (literary or scientific) are people of contemptible native intelligence and even more contemptible intellectual discipline, and he enunciates this conviction with eloquence and lucidity. It doesn't make him specially popular. Just to rub it in, he is a man of unusual handsomeness; and unusual handsomeness is about the last quality one should choose, if one felt impelled to talk about the class of "Stupid Intellectual" and at the same time not look like Coriolanus. Not that Barzun seems to mind. It just reinforces his feeling that Stupid Intellectuals would be better dead: and, with a resurgence of his parents' Gallic clarity, he goes on to knock some sense into the rest.

Actually he is a very valuable figure—not only for the U.S., but for all of us. He has courage, will, and intellectual ruthlessness. With a hundred like him, we could transform American and English education; and, as one can see from *The House of Intellect*, the transformation he wants is one that, with some qualifications, nearly all of us think necessary, though not sufficient.

He puts his case in a biting negative. He believes in Intellect, by which he means the educated and disciplined general intelligence. He believes that society loses one of its plinths if there is not a powerful section of the community who in this sense possess intellect, and who are in intellectual communication with each other. He sees the kind of intellectual society he most admires in upper-middle class Victorian England. He also sees its disappearance all over the world, most sharply and dramatically in the United States, mainly through the effect of three enemies of the general intellect, which he calls Art, Science, and Philanthropy. By *Art* he means the whole corpus of "creative" activity from which the reflective mind has been excluded. By *Science*, on which he is not so well informed, he means what I think I should call "scientism." By *Philanthropy*, he means something very much his own, the favourite target for his mischief, irony, and disrespect. He defines it as the doctrine of "free and equal opportunity, applied to things of the mind"; but he includes under it some of his pet Panglossisms, such as that learning is living, that schools exist primarily for social happiness, that the gift of intelligence is not distributed with extreme inequality. Finally, he uses it to satirise the great philanthropic foundations themselves, Ford and Rockefeller and so on, with their bureaucracy of benevolence.

A GREAT deal of this is very near the bone. It is true, Barzun's natural attitudes are

* *The House of Intellect*. By JACQUES BARZUN. Secker & Warburg. 32s. 6d.

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not egalitarian. In this country, he would be close in feeling to the more enlightened members of the Conservative front bench. He gains a certain pleasure (while I, for example, feel the precise opposite) from the brutal fact that a largish proportion of mankind are not educable beyond a modest intellectual limit. But this touch of superbity doesn't disturb his judgment much. Unlike most men who hanker after a patrician society, he understands modern industrial society very well: he doesn't try to avoid the facts of life, his mind is too strong for that. So that, although his tone sometimes puts one's back up, his conclusions come out broadly true.

Just as an aside, shall we in this country pat ourselves on the back a bit? The situation of the intellect over the entire West is much as Barzun depicts it: but here there is perhaps a shade of difference, very small but perceptible, in our favour. Believers in the general intellect have not yet lost their nerve completely here. We still, for instance, have an administrative Civil Service selected for nothing else: I suspect that the top levels of our Civil Service meet Barzun's specification more exactly than do any other group on earth. And, though our education is so bizarrely narrow, it is, again at its highest levels, competitive enough for anyone, even for Barzun. Where else in the world can children of the well-to-do find themselves taking written examinations before the age of seven? Where else is there any equivalent to our university scholarship examination? These are not, in my view, good things: but at least they are not soppy. Since soppiness is the intellectual vice that Barzun despises most, he is inclined to give us distinctly high marks. I think he exaggerates our merits, but I should myself be sorry to see us lose our national passion for competitive examinations.

Still, we are all, intellectuals of the West, in what is in essence the same fix. That is why we have to listen to Barzun. Occasionally his detachment leaves him; even in savaging contemporary U.S. intellectual mumbo-jumbo, he accepts more of it than he realises. For example, though no one has said more contemptuous things about the gobbledygook of art, he doesn't take any positive advantage of the possibilities of art. He has been enough exposed to U.S. critical theory to have a surreptitious respect for the view that a work of literary art is a structure in words, detachable from the writer, a structure in which the reflective (U.S. discursive) intelligence has no place. That view leads to the absurdity that there are, I suppose, a hundred Ph.D. theses in the U.S. on *Finnegans Wake* for every one on *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (the classical example of the reflective intelligence in full operation). In fact, just as Barzun's general intellect ought to be a social plinth, so should Intelligence-in-Art be.

Similarly, Barzun accepts, as most Americans would (but as we shouldn't), that on the whole men of intellect have no place in politics. One thinks of the first six of each of the British Parliamentary parties. Most of them are both clever and highly-educated: several (e.g., Gaitskell, Butler, Wilson) have been dons, others could have been if they had wanted. Is this a weakness? I should have thought it helps us keep Barzun's house of intellect propped up. It is very important that boss politicians and top Civil Servants and industrialists can talk to one another in the same intellectual language, and on the plane of reason. We do that more than most countries. Despite Barzun's assumption, I think we are better off because of it, not worse.

BUT those are minor quibbles. The nearer he comes to the point of action, which for him is teaching, the sharper and more authoritative he becomes. No one has ever taken a hatchet to U.S. scholastic nonsense with more wit and more intellectual effect. Remember, that nonsense is coming our way. Let us make Barzun required reading for all our secondary schools, while we've still got time. For what he says is simple: but there are many simple things, and this is one, which, because of the Gresham's Law of silliness, it takes a brave and gifted man to say. He writes:

> Nobody wants to return to the school run like a bad prison, by terror and flogging. The question is not about kindness but about instruction: Is the school a place of teaching or of psychologising? Is it to prolong vicariously the parents' love of innocence and act out their dream of a good society, or is it to impart literacy? And are we to wait till *after* the Ph.D. to get it? When, finally, is the school to sort out types of mind and, assuming that all can read, write, and count, enable each kind to acquire the facts and principles relevant to their calling and their tastes?
>
> To encompass such ends the school must know what it wants, not in the form of vague private or public virtues, but in the form of intellectual powers. It must stop blathering about sensitivity to the needs of others, and increasing responsibility for bringing about one world, and say instead: "I want a pupil who can read Burke's 'Speech on Conciliation' and solve problems in trigonometry. I want young men and women who can read French prose and write English. I want academic high school graduates who can remember what the Missouri Compromise had to do with the Civil War, and who will carry over into college their familiarity with logarithms and the techniques of the chemistry laboratory."

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And having said these or similar things after due consideration, the school must enforce what it has said.

It is because Barzun can say that, and say it as starkly, that he is important to us. Take away the wit, take away the trick of overplaying the Coriolanus part: one is left with a man in dead earnest, who happens to know what the foundations of the intellectual life must be. There aren't many of them. We had better be quick and set about adopting him for ourselves.

Two Faces of War

The Face of War. By MARTHA GELLHORN. *Hart-Davis.* 18s.

Journey with a Pistol. By NEIL MCCALLUM. *Gollancz.* 16s.

MISS GELLHORN was for eight years a war correspondent for *Collier's,* and *The Face of War* is composed of a selection from her dispatches written during that period. She tells us that "The point of these articles is that they are true; they tell what I saw," and certainly she has a professionally sharp and observant eye for the scenes of horror, destruction, and suffering of which she was, in Spain, Finland, China, Italy, France, and Germany, a privileged ringside spectator. But the problem of truth is not quite so easily settled as Miss Gellhorn implies, and indeed her claim is not altogether an honest one. Like most war correspondents, she is not content only to tell us what she saw, perhaps because what one really sees in war is so unutterably confused and chaotic that it refuses to compose any kind of a picture; it would not, after all, encourage the old folks at home to be told that the only result of all their efforts and sacrifices and sufferings is the meaningless shambles which is all the naked eye sees of a battlefield.

So war correspondents nearly always tell us, not only what they see, but what they feel; it gives dignity to the proceedings. Even more, they tell us what *we* ought to feel; and Miss Gellhorn is no exception. What she does feel are the appropriate emotions of grief and pity for the sufferings which war inflicts; only somehow she writes as if even these feelings could be conscripted into the cause of democracy. Germans whose homes, families, possessions are destroyed by air attack suffer no less than Spaniards, but while suffering in Spain rightly provokes Miss Gellhorn to pity and indignation, in Germany it only provokes her to a sneer. It is no doubt true that the destruction by shellfire of a little Dutch town like Nijmegen is a tragedy and justifies Miss Gellhorn's moral that "it would be a good thing if the Germans were never allowed to make war again." It is equally true that the destruction of Hiroshima by atom bombing was no less of a tragedy, and justifies the moral that it would be well if Americans were similarly inhibited from war. It may be true that all democratic soldiers, sailors, and airmen are as gallant, modest, uncomplaining, and good-looking as those Miss Gellhorn had the good fortune to meet on her progress round the theatres of war, though I seem to have met some who did not strike me that way; but it is certainly not true, as anyone who fought them could assure Miss Gellhorn, that all German soldiers were the undersized, unhealthy, and contemptible little runts which is all Miss Gellhorn seems to have seen of them. It may be true that all American pilots and GI's were filled with that burning hatred of the German race which rose so spontaneously to their lips in conversation with Miss Gellhorn; but apart from the fact that few soldiers I ever knew talked that way, it is difficult to reconcile such feelings with the instinctive desire to make friends with the Germans which made American and British soldiers alike, and to their credit, the despair of anyone who tried to enforce the preposterous SHAEF order against fraternisation.

The trouble is that while one trusts Miss Gellhorn's eyes one does not trust her heart, and her heart interferes with her vision; and this distrust is increased by the deliberately flat, affectedly simple, mock-Hemingway prose, more a trick than a style, in which Miss Gellhorn describes what she saw and felt at the wars. The result is that none of these articles, re-published, as Miss Gellhorn tells us, with a praiseworthy intention of reminding us that war is horrible, is either memorable or moving.

Perhaps it may be true that, as Yeats said of Wilfred Owen, pity is not enough; or it may even be true that in war the only really honest form of pity is self-pity. It never seems to occur to Miss Gellhorn that in war *everybody* is degraded by what he (or she) does; soldiers would say that war correspondents are more degraded than most. It takes two sides, sometimes three, to make a war; but once they are joined they form a single pattern to which conflicting political and spiritual aims are curiously irrelevant. It is Mr. Neil McCallum's deep understanding of this aspect of war, which is its true face, which makes *Journey with a Pistol* such a remarkable book. For war is an intellectual problem more than an emotional one; it is also a moral problem; and it is with the intellectual and moral problems of war that *Journey with a Pistol* is concerned.

Mr. McCallum was an infantry officer in the

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Eighth Army, and took part in its victorious advance from Alamein to Sicily, where he was wounded. *Journey with a Pistol* consists of a journal which he kept during this period and which is now published unaltered. It is remarkable that Mr. McCallum is almost entirely lacking in the qualities which Miss Gellhorn ascribes to fighting men. He has little or no hatred for the enemy, whom he regards rather with a kind of detached respect, as men who were carrying out with great technical proficiency the same appalling task as his own. His hatred is reserved, not for the enemy, but for politicians, generals, staff officers, that is to say, all those whose function it is to *organise* the machinery of war up to the point where the real business of killing can begin; his greatest contempt he keeps for Sir Winston Churchill's intolerable mock heroics and Field Marshal Montgomery's simple-minded enthusiasm for blood. He is neither gay nor gallant nor uncomplaining; his fear of death is naked and unashamed, and he complains bitterly and ceaselessly not only against the intolerable employment to which the army puts human beings but also against the unending series of physical pains and discomforts which constitute the soldier's life in action. But most of all it is the moral position in which he is involved that ceaselessly offends his mind and spirit. For Mr. McCallum has no illusions about the part he has to play. He sees himself as a single unit in a vast complicated organisation, cumbrous and yet marvellously efficient for its single purpose of enabling millions of men to kill each other; that, for him, is the fundamental reality of war. And he notes with accuracy, yet with feeling which is close to despair, the change which the great machine has to effect in a man's personality in order to adapt him to its purposes: the steady, unceasing abrasion of individuality, the blunting of sensibility in order that it shall not interfere with the business of killing, the meticulously ordered exclusion of all distractions that may take away his stomach for the job in hand, the double-talk and double-think which are required to make palatable the organised slaughter of man by man.

In this condition it is a miracle that the human spirit should survive at all, but survive it does, though one may doubt, as Mr. McCallum does, whether it does not lose some of its bloom in the process. It is almost with a sense of shame that Mr. McCallum records those moments which, amid all the murderous futilities of war, suddenly remind him that *this* is not what men were born for: the flowers that suddenly cover the desert, the green luxuriance of the country around Djidjelli, "a fairyland of sunshine and fertile fields where poppies grew

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in tens of thousands," the memory of some lines from Rilke. For these moments are a reminder of a time when he was not a prisoner of the huge machine of war, not the killing animal which is the model at which a soldier aims, but a human being in full and private possession of all his senses and imagination and capacity for joy.

Mr. McCallum records his feelings and sensations, the groping thoughts through which he tries to grasp the reality of his position, in a prose which by its directness makes the strongest contrast with Miss Gellhorn's affectations of simplicity. For while Mr. McCallum's experiences are those which he shared with thousands and millions of men, in burning deserts, in wastes of snow, in mud and in ice and in flood, he is also one of the rare persons to whom a voice has been given to speak of what he and they suffered. For the majority of men, war is an experience to be borne only in resignation and silence, and of them Siegfried Sassoon's lines remain true:

Most went glumly through it,
Dumbly doomed to rue it

but Mr. McCallum was not content only to suffer and endure; he has annotated his experiences in a way which removes all taint of egotism from them, simply because they are true of all men who in the abyss of war still tried to cling to their human condition. *Journey with a Pistol* seems to me the best book which has yet come out of the war; certainly it recreates the reality of war more truthfully than any of those thousands of books in which war is represented as a high-spirited adventure, an epic of heroism, a conflict of good and evil, or simply jolly good fun, like a fox-hunt; or than those memoirs of generals for whom war was simply a problem of strategy, or an opportunity for the display of professional talents which only came into their own when millions of men, organised in great armies, fleets, and air forces, were correctly launched into the business of exterminating each other.

Goronwy Rees

Ideal Aunt, True Patron

Edward Marsh: Patron of the Arts. A Biography. By CHRISTOPHER HASSALL. *Longmans.* 42s.

"A PUBLIC figure familiar in London," as Mr. Hassall calls him, Sir Edward Marsh, always known as Eddie Marsh, was born in 1872 and died in 1953. For many years it was impossible to go about much in London without catching sight of him. He was a tirelessly sociable man of such various interests and activities that during the first half of this century he became known in the spheres of politics, literature, painting, and the theatre, as well as in what used to be called Society. With a wide range of acquaintance, a tongue apparently never still, an addiction to copious letter-writing, and a tendency to preserve letters, Marsh left behind him a great mass of material, both on paper and in other people's memories, that was to be of interest to his biographer. Mr. Hassall has gone to great lengths to produce a life-size portrait of his subject, for whom he feels affection and gratitude. He is clear, balanced, and understanding, and has obviously put a great deal of work into his task—but the complaint has been made that he has not put enough work into it. That he might have been more selective, and briefer, more ready to try and sum up than to try and leave nothing out, is arguable. He has certainly admitted trivialities and masses of detail, some of it seemingly not of general or perhaps lasting interest; but no doubt he felt that to show how Marsh touched life at many points it was necessary to exhibit them. His book is a careful compendium, abounding in interesting facts and glimpses of life and character, and would surely give the greatest satisfaction to its subject, if he were able to see it—though Marsh would not have been acutely pleased to find an accent on the first vowel of the name of Degas.

Marsh's main function in life was to be helpful to others, and it would be no disparagement to call him an ideal or universal aunt. He had all the energy, benevolence, unselfishness, social poise, quickness of sympathy, capacity for enthusiasm, and precision of principle with which perfect aunts, if they could be made to order, would be equipped. Owing to an attack of mumps at the age of 15, he was made impotent for life and, Mr. Hassall explains, "cultivated a capacity for friendship which, untroubled by physical desire, could develop into a devotion characteristically feminine in its tenderness." For the greater part of his life he lived in the same rooms in London, cared for by a female factotum who "lived out," a delightful country-woman called Mrs. Elgy. In his early thirties, he began to show a flair for "talent in creative artists at the outset of their careers," bought their pictures, filled his rooms with his acquisitions, and helped them not only by buying their work but by encouraging and helping them with friendship and sometimes with money. Among the painters he helped before they were established were Mark Gertler, William Roberts, Stanley Spencer, Christopher

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Wood, Ivon Hitchens, and Graham Sutherland.

His concern with writers is no less famous. If some of his swans were geese, and some lame ducks, there were some he helped to soar. A couple of years before the First World War, Marsh took up Rupert Brooke, for whom he perhaps did more than anybody has done for a poet within living memory. In particular he bore, after Brooke's death, the long ordeal of having to deal with Brooke's mother. Mrs. Brooke, bereaved of both her sons, developed a spiteful jealousy of Marsh, of his intimacy with her son Rupert, and of his understandably somewhat possessive attitude to his idol. Her jealousy seems to have been like the warped feeling of one woman towards another woman. It must be said that Marsh behaved with exceptional patience and restraint under these trials, which Mr. Hassall reports at length. Because the Georgian poets are to some extent out of favour to-day, Marsh's work for them cannot be pooh-poohed. His anthologies of Georgian Poetry were important in their day and have a place in literary history; that place was made by the energy of Marsh, who, if he perhaps over-rated some of his poets, recognised in D. H. Lawrence, for example, as early as 1912, "elements of great and rather strange power and beauty."

"All I want," Marsh once wrote to Gertler, "is that you should go ahead on your own lines, and that I should be able to help you to make things easier for you." There spoke the perfect patron—and Marsh was not only patron, he was often literary agent, proof reader, counsellor, editor, financial backer—and faithful aunt. The question must arise, was Marsh a rich man? No. His grandfather was the Prime Minister who was assassinated, Spencer Perceval, and to Marsh came a residuum of the compensatory "murder money" voted to Perceval's family. From this by no means large capital Marsh was able to do more than promote a market for new painters and writers, he was even able at times to keep them from starvation; Middleton Murry and Katherine Mansfield he found taking their suppers at a place in Little Cold Bath Fields where the knives were fastened to the table and a ha'porth of potatoes went with a penny cup of "coffee." It would be difficult to exaggerate or over-praise the extent and helpfulness of Marsh's activities for the well-being of the younger writers of his day, and it is worth pointing out that he was not a man of leisure. From 1906 onwards he became private secretary to the young Winston Churchill, whose friendship he won and retained, and whose prose he revised. Many a midnight hour was spent by Marsh, after a day's work in Whitehall in wartime, writing letters and doing accounts and editorial work for his protégés. And all of his public and private usefulness and diligence were those of a man who was never alone:

> Every night, no matter how late his return, he dealt with the correspondence which was for him an essential, and perhaps the central, feature of his private life, and since he contrived never to be alone by day it meant that he was in converse with somebody or other by pen or word of mouth throughout his waking hours.

I think it was Gide who said that a man who never finds himself alone never finds himself at all, but what Marsh found was that in spite of spreading himself so thin he was to mean much to many. In later life his inability to be alone found an outlet in "unmitigated theatre-going," and so amiable was he, and so ready to be interested, that there were fears about his discrimination: "He enjoys everything," protested Arnold Bennett. In that habit Marsh again suggests some beaming, theatre-going aunt. Much earlier, in 1910, he undertook a correspondence with the wife of the new Governor-General of South Africa, who had "expressed a wish to be kept in touch with London society." Though his letters to her are peppered with well-known names, and have the stale, scented aroma that clings to records of affluent, self-confident Late Edwardian "Society" life, and with the aroma a period interest, they have much of the twittering fatuity of some gossip-columnist—"Everyone is very pretty this year," or "A capital ballroom, delightful garden, and heaps of motors." "When you write to me," Marsh's friend Conrad Russell remarked, " 'Lady X is a dear little woman,' I feel very nervous, because I know she is a vulgar old bitch with the brain of a squirrel."

Perhaps it was because of his amiable tolerance of the trivial superficialities of well-to-do social intercourse that Marsh, who had after all a very active brain and who had had a careful education, held such respect for the creativeness which works in solitude and which was not within his own scope. The less impressive characteristics of his temperament and habit of life were part of his whole nature, and inseparable from his benevolent energy, from his flair, from the hard work he did for so many of his contemporaries. His care for the proper use of words is seen in his translations of La Fontaine, Horace, and Fromentin, and in the evidence (given in detail by Mr. Hassall) of the submission to him by Sir Winston Churchill and Mr. Somerset Maugham of their prose for correction. But whatever his merits as a translator and a corrector of manuscripts and proof-sheets, it seems likely and proper that he will be chiefly remembered for his patronage of young and struggling painters and writers. And to read his life is to be left with the question whether

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patronage to-day bears comparison with patronage of the Marsh variety.

It is sometimes believed that private patronage, in the Welfare State, has almost ceased to exist, chiefly because of economic pressure upon the persons whose means would otherwise enable them, if they felt inclined, to back unfolding talents. Where, it might be asked, is anybody like Eddie Marsh to-day? But where, one might answer, is there anybody like Eddie Marsh at any time? He was unique in his abilities and devotions, though not in his opportunities. But it would be hasty to assume that private patronage has ceased: the fact of its being private prevents its being generally known. I am credibly informed that there are to-day buyers of pictures who are far from being millionaires but are discriminating collectors of the work of young and experimental painters, and not in an impersonal way. To buy pictures from caprice or impulse, or because of a hunch that they may prove good investments, is not patronage; but to buy them because the painter is seen or believed to be an original of uncommon promise, and to know and care whether he has leisure, enough to eat, a proper place to work in, and the materials of his art, is as rare as true originality—it is true patronage, and there is nothing in the present state of society to make it impossible. In fact, it should in some ways be easier than usual. One cannot complain that the practising artist is ignored, Mr. Rodrigo Moynihan wrote the other day; "if he has any originality or sense of style he is almost bound to get a showing."

As with painting, so with poetry. Writing in a recent issue of the *Author*, Mr. Roy Fuller assumes that "competitive publishing in a reasonably full-employed society will guarantee plenty of opportunity for poets to bring out their collections." Competitive publishers do sometimes hesitate to court a certain loss without perceptible long-term hopes of profit, but it does seem generally true that the painter or poet, or prose writer, if his work is any good at all, can get it shown or published. The confused standards of an anxious age of rapid change indeed sometimes make it easier than usual for the mediocre or fraudulent painter or writer to impose upon uncertain tastes. It is the private patron, assuming him always to exist in some form or other, doing good in secret, who is or ought to be the talent scout. He cannot infallibly deputise for posterity; it is something if he can foster talents important, like Rupert Brooke's, in their own day, and not forgotten in a later day.

Meanwhile we have seen, especially since the war and especially where poetry is concerned, a growth in this country of official and corporate

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patronage. We may not have anything here to compare with the various and munificent American foundations, but a careful computation of what the B.B.C. has done for poetry, and the Arts Council, and of the solid help associated with the names of Guinness and W. H. Smith, would bring out the range and force of new forms of patronage. Though it may be true that the poet, by the act of writing poetry, is defying the public, there is no reason why the public should not pay to be defied. And in nothing is the memory of Marsh as patron more radiant than in the fact that he was able to help new poets (Dylan Thomas, for example) whose work was not at all his sort of thing. Mr. Hassall has rather gone on and on about him, but he has done honour to an exceptional man, and provided an exceptional literary entertainment.

William Plomer

Monk and Messiah

The Use of Imagination. Educational Thought and the Literary Mind. By WILLIAM WALSH. *Chatto & Windus.* 25s.

The Objective Society. By EVERETT KNIGHT. *Routledge & Kegan Paul.* 16s.

"CULTURE is what remains after one has forgotten everything." Whoever said that —and Dr. Knight quotes it in passing without telling us who—said almost all we need to know about this evasive condition, besides summing up the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of vindicating a literary education. If culture has become a dirty word in some quarters, it is just because the phenomenon has been treated as a luxury that can be acquired and shown off, like a fancy waistcoat or a rococo chair; and the word is one of those that gain currency only when the thing itself is either threatened or lost. When culture becomes self-conscious and ceases to take itself for granted, it ceases to be culture. One cannot defend it, therefore, without laying it open to renewed attacks. By offering to prove that the fancy waistcoat keeps its wearer warm, that the rococo chair can still be sat on, the defenders of culture do more harm to it than its enemies; they have admitted the criterion of utility, and confirmed the utilitarian's suspicion that the plain commodity is the better one. In fact, of course, culture is a necessity; though it is neither positive nor measurable, and its quality varies, no one can do without it.

Of the "two cultures," the scientific needs little defence in a utilitarian civilisation; the proof and justification of science are in technology. Yet it is only the criterion of utility that has divided the two cultures. If all arts students were destined to become copywriters or political propagandists, they would be generally respected and respectable, as they tend to be in Communist countries; they would be technicians. The true division is not that between the sciences and the arts, but between pure sciences and pure arts on the one hand, applied sciences and applied arts on the other; and even this division is a theoretical one, since all science and all art affect human nature and, at least indirectly, must end by affecting the physical world.

Both Professor Walsh and Dr. Knight are primarily concerned with the educational value of the arts, and of literature in particular. It is in their stress on the formative, and subjective, character of all knowledge that they agree. About half of Dr. Knight's book is devoted to proving that all learning is purposive, that "we see only what we look for." Professor Walsh stresses Coleridge's distinction between what a writer means and what he intends. "To know is in its very essence a verb active," he quotes from Coleridge, and these words could have served as an epigraph for Dr. Knight's book. Both writers attack the cult of objectivity to which academic humanists have been driven in their eagerness to keep up with the scientists. Both attack the dominant linguistic philosophy—"Anglo-Saxon philosophy is no longer a search for the truth, it is a vested interest," says Dr. Knight—and the kind of literary education that is no more than "the translation of the living word into a dead language, for the purpose of memory, arrangement, and general communication" (Coleridge again). But there all similarity between them ends.

Professor Walsh confines himself to the "supremely civilising influence" of English literature and the right way of transmitting this influence from teacher to pupil. He presupposes an unbroken tradition of literature and humanistic culture, a society that will not utterly reject the values inherent in them, and an academic system that will continue to foster them, even if in the wrong way—by the reduction of literature to knowledge that can be tested and measured. Within these limits his book is a lucid and persuasive guide to poets and critics ranging from Wordsworth, Keats, and Arnold, to W. B. Yeats, Mr. Eliot, and Dr. Leavis. The chapters that most impressed me—and Professor Walsh retains the learner's receptiveness to his subject, to the point of self-effacement—were those on "Coleridge and the Education of Teachers," "G. M. Hopkins and a Sense of the Particular," and "The Educational Ideas of D. H. Lawrence."

Dr. Knight also quotes extensively, but his

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quotations are the curiously assorted weapons of a total war. His first assumption is that "Western society is adrift"; in the light of this assumption, and premises mainly derived from Husserl and Sartre, he deals with philosophy, history, science, visual art, sociology, and politics, as well as with literature (mainly French) and university education. His book is a violent, packed, and slightly incoherent polemic against the Intellectual Establishment. By his standards, and in his terminology, even Professor Walsh would be condemned as a "monk," as opposed to the "messiah" called for in the present crisis, because Professor Walsh represents the eclecticism and "pluralism" of the "objective society," and has thus contributed to "the idyllic murmur of the great wheel of Anglo-Saxon empiricism" which "is lulling an entire society to sleep." Professor Walsh quarrels on humanistic grounds with our

> mechanistic society, which though through and through naturalistic in belief, yet reduces the natural universe to fractional and peripheral attention, which huddles the organic away behind the fabricated and which drowns out the rhythms of nature with the jerkings of the combustion engine. . . .

With such an attitude in mind, Dr. Knight asserts that "it is not the technicians who need culture; it is the intellectuals who need a sense of purpose." Professor Walsh believes that "the poet is the standard of humanity, not the ordinary man." Dr. Knight hates the notion of "learning as the fabrication of a superior self rather than as a tool," and recoils from the "terrifying" thought "of an entire population raised through culture to the morose dignity of an arts faculty." He rejects culture, because "like religion, it offers salvation to the individual," and he prefers the élite of scientists, engineers, and doctors to Professor Walsh's élite created by "the civic use of the imagination" (Henry James). The differences between them are radical and innumerable, but their ultimate difference is one between incompatible views of society.

Dr. Knight's main quarrel with the "monks" is that they are ineffectual, and would be even more so if they were not upheld by an outmoded and hypocritical establishment. "British stupidity," he writes, "is simply the carefully nurtured ability to refuse existence to what actually is or happens." But while insisting on the need for commitment and choice, in Sartre's sense, for the sake of action, he argues that this choice can take only one form, namely, to "cooperate with history"—that Hegelian steamroller which no one controls. Similarly, he assumes the superiority of Communism merely because it is more ruthlessly efficient, as if that efficiency were not based on an objectivity even greater than that of Western society—an objectivity that includes human beings among the materials of technology. His final prescription is that "the one hope for permanent peace lies in our willingness to take up Marxism once more at the point where it went astray into scientism." Dr. Knight is perceptive enough about the social revolution in Britain, that rise of the proletariat to bourgeois respectability which he explains by saying that "the worker has consented to his alienation in exchange for the products of modern industry"; and of course he blames the intellectuals for encouraging this offence against Marx's version of history.

For all its inconsistencies, Dr. Knight's book is well worth reading as an antidote to complacency. The "monk," he says, is a bad fighter because "it is not his business to survive, but to be right." There is no harm in being confronted with that alternative, and it is honestly, though too drastically, put. A part of Dr. Knight's diagnosis is confirmed by the extent to which the study of the arts in British universities has already changed in the last fifteen years, because a growing proportion of the students makes no bones about not being interested in education or culture for their own sake, but in the material

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and social advantages which an arts degree still confers. It may be that the motive has not changed, only the awareness of it and the readiness to admit it. But in any case humanistic culture is threatened because it can no longer be taken for granted.

The importance of both writers is that they respond to this crisis, Professor Walsh by stating the case for the "monk," Dr. Knight by challenging it in the name of the "messiah." The disestablishment of culture does not mean the end of culture; the activist opposition to it, whether capitalist or Marxist, may even purify it by driving it underground.

Michael Hamburger

On David Jones

Epoch and Artist. By David Jones. *Faber.* 25s.

It is at first sight an odd world that welcomes Sir Charles Snow's Rede Lecture and Mr. Jones' book almost simultaneously; for Sir Charles' scientist might be strongly moved to apply to Mr. Jones the language of Peacock:

> While the historian and the philosopher are advancing in, and accelerating, the progress of knowledge, the poet is wallowing in the rubbish of departed ignorance, and raking up the ashes of dead savages.... A poet in our times is a semi-barbarian in a civilised community. He lives in the days that are past... as if there were no such things in existence as mathematicians, astronomers, chemists... who have built into the upper air of intelligence a pyramid, from the summit of which they see the modern Parnassus far beneath them....

Yet the "intellectual" will find it easy to take Mr. Jones seriously; and the cultural divide about which Sir Charles writes so well seems to me to reflect a grand modern antinomy that is well worth examining from a different viewpoint.

Mr. Jones is not a crank; his books are strongly marked by his personality, but at the core his thinking is founded on assumptions not only familiar but, so far as we know, essential to the production of the kind of art most people are prepared to call important. These attitudes are such that an unsympathetic student of them might describe them as morbid. They seem to indicate a kind of atavism, an inability to think, however sophisticatedly, in any but primitivistic terms; and this, abating the pejorative expression, is on the whole an acceptable appraisal. The hostility of Sir Charles' scientist to modern art is based upon the suspicion, perfectly justified, that it encourages only the backward look; the appeal to, and the explanation in terms of, the primitive. They observe that this can be a great encouragement to self-evident mumbo-jumbo of all kinds, and to an illiberalism they find detestable. Most scientists are themselves what historians of ideas call "hard primitivists," they regard the past as something to be moving on from, and the state of nature, if they could be bothered to imagine it, as harsh and brutal; the notion of progress, so important to them, always involves a degree of this "hardness," though most scientists seem to take a minimal interest in the past. The "intellectual" finds this "rootlessness" repulsive (he habitually thinks of his own kind of work as "organic," and lacks patience with others who are not under the influence of this myth). He prefers the backward look to a human condition in which the intelligence is not free (acting freely it makes, as with the scientist, a universe of death) but deeply involved with, and subordinate to, "imagination." He is certainly anti-intellectualist, and might be called irrationalist; and the more he talks about his primitive criteria, his illiterate, unscientific golden age, the more he strikes the scientist as being wilfully self-retarded. But this charge troubles him as little as the scientist is troubled by the counter-attack. For it is virtually a condition of his activity that this mutual incomprehension should exist.

Mr. Jones' primitivism is of the Romantic tradition; it would have seemed painfully odd neither to Joyce (whom Mr. Jones greatly admires) nor to Yeats, whose belief that art must be "constantly flooded with the passions and beliefs of ancient times" Mr. Jones would fully endorse. He is a Catholic, and obsessed with the *romanitas* of the Welsh tradition. These and other interests give Mr. Jones' writing a personal flavour; he is almost as mannered as Yeats, though much less skilful, and sometimes negligent in exposition and ugly in style. His most important essay, "Art and Sacrament," is, however, blameless in these respects, and at his best Mr. Jones is a remarkably powerful writer. He is well read in an artist's way—his reading is assimilated into a growing body of ideas and convictions, not judged but ransacked. His major source is Maritain, but Maritain thought and felt and disagreed with (on the relation between "symbol" and "sacrament," for instance). He holds that man, *homo faber*, is distinguished from beast and from angel by his power to make *intransitively* and *gratuitously*. The things he so makes are "laid up from other things," *anathemata*: "things that are the signs of some-

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thing other." With these things, their integrity, consonance, and clarity, the artist as such is alone concerned, for signs belong to the domain of Art, not Prudence; yet it is his human commitment to Prudence that makes the artist's work a sign of something other, an "intimation of otherness." Necessarily, then, he will reject the view of the scientist "that particular things are no more than they are." Also he will judge political systems not as the scientist does, but by the ways to which they help or hinder this sign-making activity; the door is clearly open to illiberal opinions.

The character of these signs is sacramental; there is, "in the trivial and the profound, no escape from sacrament." It is our nature to make them, and theirs to suggest otherness, and to recall; they are thus related to the Sacraments (Compare the Eucharistic "Do this for an anamnesis of Me"). Their significance depends upon historical "deposits," upon an anamnesis of history, punctuated by "otherness": Christ, at the Last Supper, "placed Himself in the order of Signs." In the "present civilisational phase" the sacramental aspect of art is neglected; there has been a Break, and man-the-artist is estranged from his society. What we make well (bombers, rockets) we do not make gratuitously, as anathemata. The scientific activity which so absorbs us is for Mr. Jones, as it was for his master Eric Gill, a literally brutal activity; not being *faber*, *homo* is reduced to a beast.

This doctrine suffers from its relative simplicity; Mr. Jones does not discriminate fully (as Maritain did) between different kinds of sign, or allow proper weight to what the scholastics called "intention." For him the word "wood" will invariably, in a healthy society, evoke the Wood of the Cross, regardless of what is intended; for "the arts abhor any loppings off of meanings or emptyings out, any loss of the totality of connotation, any loss of recession and thickness through." It is less important to argue about this than to see that Mr. Jones is here objectifying in his own way the familiar feeling that the artist has lost permanent access to a rich common "mythus"; alone in the age of the Dynamo he worships the Virgin. He asks Yeats' question, "How can the arts overcome the slow dying of men's hearts that we call the progress of the word . . . without becoming the garments of religion as in old times?" Answering it, the anti-intellectualism of the modern intellectual has, by ransacking the deposits—Welsh, Irish, Neo-Platonic, anthropological, and so forth—produced religions to fit the garments. To every man his own *Vision*, his own answer to Darwin, Huxley, and their successors.

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primitivism is characteristic of all "intellectuals." Leaving aside such examples as the misguided Neo-Platonism of some Yeatsians, and a persistent Romantic mediævalism, one can suggest the prestige and the authority of the attitude by referring to Auerbach's *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. This very learned book argues that Christianity superseded all previous modes of representing reality because thenceforth the most important events could, as in the life of Christ, combine the heroic and humble in such a way that an elevated style could absorb every kind of detail, and yet impose upon that detail a "figural" interpretation, as if every particular event signified precisely "something other," yet "without prejudice to the power of its concrete reality here and now." And Auerbach goes on to show that modern "realism" lacks this "figural" quality. Another writer of the critical *avant-garde*, very different in many ways but also essentially typological in approach, is Northrop Frye (*Anatomy of Criticism*). There are many others, some of them less sophisticated, most of them less protected by learning; Miss Helen Gardner has lately made some cautionary observations on the modern taste for typology. It is a very civilised primitivism, devoted to the recovery of imaginative patterns and relations so subtle that we in our brutality have lost them. Maritain once distinguished between children and primitives by saying that the child believes the story of Alice but "wakes up" and understands very well that little girls do not go down rabbit-holes, but the primitive would always think they did, and never wake up, because "he has not been dragged away from the world of imagination." We are all prone quite uncritically to treat mediæval men as primitive in precisely this way.

An anatomy of modern primitivism would be a lifework. There would be many ugly categories of it: psychologistic, mythographic, imagistic, for instance. *L'homme qui médite est un animal dépravé*. The development of intellect is the true Fall of Man. This is the basic Romantic primitivism: the high valuation of primitive image-making powers. Under imagistic primitivism would be included all modern doctrines of symbol, image, ideogram, *figura*, and type. If you doubt that they flourish, consider not only long-established doctrines like Pound's, but also the success in America of Feidelson's *Symbolism and American Literature*, or of the philosophy of Cassirer, here known best in the version of his disciple, Mrs. Suzanne K. Langer. Cassirer, in fact, represents this variety of primitivism in its purest and most self-conscious form; for, well aware of its origin in Kant and Herder, he develops it to the point where it becomes a philosophy of symbolic

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forms depending upon a theory of pre-logical conception and expression. For him, human art, language, and science are the very organs of reality; they alone make it possible, by way of symbols, to apprehend "anything real." Science is posterior to the other symbolic forms, as logical relations are posterior to names; so science marks an emancipation of the mind. But art requires a step back to "mythical thinking," in which the name and the object are the same, where there is no distinction between thought and emotion. The language of poetry has, of course, all the parts of speech, not only nouns; but it is obliged constantly to make the primitivising leap back into mythical thinking. Lyric poetry is particularly concerned with the rendering of the sensible present, the "momentary god" of the primitive; but just as such moments are rare in the civilised consciousness, so our language has grown less and less suited to expressing them. Cassirer here gives a very elaborate exposition of a doctrine which, especially in the versions of Bergson and Hulme, has had a strong influence on modern art; it is the central myth of "dissociation" in its linguistic aspect. Art is, essentially, an atavistic activity, seeking a temporary fusion of thought and feeling that is foreign to modern consciousness; yet it is justified as providing insights into the formal structure of reality not only different from, but richer than, those of science. Mrs. Langer, emphasising the "pre-rational" element in Cassirer's explanations, points out that in certain pathological conditions of the brain "the power of abstraction is lost, and the patient falls back on picturesque metaphorical language"; scientists who think modern poets ought to have their heads examined are free to quote this remark. They can add that the Paris in which modern poetry took shape was also the Paris of Charcot and the vogue of neurasthenia. The Romantic attack on intellect prepared this situation; mythical, imagistic, organicist thinking becomes as desirable for the artist as it is undesirable for the scientist; the first stands on the emblematic, myth-haunted mountain, the second on Peacock's intelligent pyramid.

Since the artist's *anathemata* are also acts of *anamnesis* (to go back to Mr. Jones' terminology) the question of deposits are for him extraordinarily important; and deposits, historical or psychic, are part of the problem of imagistic primitivism. They are usually occult; they may be the psychic residua of the Jungians, or the discrete Neo-Platonic texts of Yeats, or many other things. In fact the most interesting aspect of these deposits is this protean quality. The *sapientia veterum* was a complex Renaissance cult, but the wisdom concealed in ancient images was not, in the eyes of Spenser or Chapman, what it became for Blake, or for Yeats, with Blake and 19th-century French occultism as well as his own indefatigable reading and experiment behind him. Mr. Jones has his own highly individual Welsh-Catholic deposits, and there are many others. To argue for the absolute value of such systems, as some do, is manifestly absurd and harmful. They are not required to be valid in themselves, but to provide contexts for the anti-intellectualism that modern art, for historical reasons, requires; its character is such that it *must* be in conflict with a scientific world-view to survive at all.

This certainly creates problems for a peacemaker, and for anybody accustomed to thinking of problems as soluble and obscurities as undesirable. The artist's habit of conceiving life as a tragedy, his air of living in a fallen world, will strike a Rutherford as mere posing. To get a closer understanding between the two it would certainly be necessary to effect a major revolution in the arts; it is impossible, I think, to guess what the changes would be.

Anyone who calls this an extravagant statement should try to find scientists who could take Mr. Jones' book seriously, or artists willing to call it nonsense.

Frank Kermode

Duckworth Books

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FROM THE OTHER SHORE

Letter from Russia

SHE looked both embarrassed and sad when she admitted that she had now been flying to London as stewardess on the Russian TU 104 jet for more than a month, but had yet to be allowed to see London. "Unfortunately we always return the same day we arrive," she said with a sigh. "So there is no time to visit London. But we are told," she quickly added, "that in the winter we will be staying in London overnight. I hope to be able to see London then."

Hope, hope, hope is the human craving the Soviet Government has been using for a long time to keep the nation's belief in the future and in its destiny pulsing. Even though most of these hopes don't seem as close to fulfilment as the stewardess's, I found that this clinging to hope pervades everything in Russia to-day, and more than ever before. As the Government increasingly succeeds in demonstrating that it is fulfilling at least some of the hopes people have had for many long years, aspirations become more demanding, more ambitious, more complicated, and they have far-reaching implications.

IT IS not surprising, therefore, that the Soviet rulers, and most Russians I came in contact with, condemn any form of pessimism. As an instance, Professor Norbert Wiener, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who created "cybernetics" which deals with the relationship between human beings and machines, takes a gloomy view of the likely influence of automation of industry on the fabric of society, unless it is carefully planned. Some five years ago *Pravda* denounced Dr. Wiener as a "cigar-smoking bourgeois pseudo-scientist." The Soviet Government has presented automation of industry as the open sesame to greatness, to achieving a higher living standard more quickly, as a promise of shorter working hours and more consumer goods. But it has vigorously denied that automation could cause unemployment or anything else unpleasant or problematical. In recent months, however, Professor Wiener's books have been published in Russian. They include an introduction warning the reader that, while Dr. Wiener's views are interesting, they have "dangerous aspects." When I asked a leading Russian scientist how it happened that these books were published, in spite of *Pravda*'s scorn, he replied with a sly smile: "*Pravda* represents the dogma, you know, but if we scientists find something interesting we don't worry about the dogma. This does not mean, of course, that we agree with Professor Wiener's pessimistic outlook. We are not afraid of machines. We think we will be able to control them and put them to good use."

Many Western writers are published in Russia to point a contrast between the pessimism inspired by life in the West and the optimism that Soviet life inspires—Aldous Huxley, for instance, is widely read. Official socialist realism, of course, is designed to make writers and artists see life the way the Party wants them to see it. But aberrations do occur—Dudintsev's *Not by Bread Alone*, Pasternak's *Zhivago*.

When I was in Moscow I went to see an exhibition of contemporary paintings in Gorki Park. Its existence was hardly known, in fact my *Intourist* guide had the greatest difficulty in finding the pavilion. None of the paintings was outstanding, but many of them hinted at attempts to break free from socialist realism. Although the satirical magazine *Krokodil* does not usually devote much space to art criticism, it devoted a whole page to caustic censure of this exhibition. "There is nothing clear in the pictures . . . not a single smile flashes . . . these are growing pains, and must not become chronic." To me the editor of *Krokodil* complained: "If only these young painters would get out of their studios and study real life, this would not happen!" When I suggested that their reasons for staying in their studios might have something to do with their view about real life, he abruptly dismissed this possibility. "There is something wrong with the painters," Boris Egerov said, "not with life."

I FOUND the editors of *Krokodil* intelligent, well-read, enterprising young men with a sense of humour usually better balanced than the one they use in their magazine, certainly sharp enough to exploit the weaknesses of Western society and not entirely unaware of limitations in their own society. "Our aims," the assistant editor said, "are to criticise the shortcomings in our life, educate people by pointing out to them bad examples, to be a literary magazine, and to amuse."

"Why don't you make fun of the abysmal dullness of *Pravda*?" I suggested at one point. Ever since Mr. Adzhubei (Khrushchev's son-in-law) took over the editorship of *Izvestia* and brightened it up, this subject has been widely discussed in Moscow. The editors shrugged their shoulders somewhat regretfully. "You know," one of them replied, "we are published by *Pravda*, so it is difficult for us to criticise it." I was tempted to carry the argument a little further. I reminded them that David Low, in the days when he drew cartoons for the *Evening Standard*, did not hesitate to make fun of Lord Beaverbrook when he felt like it. But Low was not a popular example.

"We used to publish Low's cartoons during the war," one of the editors remarked, "but we don't any longer, he has become very anti-Russian." *Punch* and *The New Yorker* they did not consider political satirical magazines. But even though they consider *Krokodil* a satirical magazine they find the average Russian or the bureaucrats safer targets than political leaders. Exposures, they explained, had made them popular. "We get about eight hundred letters a day from our readers, most of them telling us about various shortcomings in factories

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or in local government, cases of corruption, black-market dealings. Often we send our own reporters to investigate these accusations, and, depending on the result and the importance of the case, publish our findings or pass them on to the proper authority."

"But how about criticising the Government itself?" I insisted, and was proudly shown a full-page cartoon ribbing the Minister of Education.

"How about making fun of Mr. Khrushchev?" For a moment there was an embarrassed silence. "No, not Mr. Khrushchev. We don't do that. He is engaged in too serious work." But, since I had heard earlier by the grapevine that there had actually been a discussion among the editors about publishing a cartoon of Mr. Khrushchev, I pressed on to see whether one of them would at least give a hint of that discussion.

"But don't you think a man like Mr. Khrushchev, who likes to poke fun and tell jokes, wouldn't mind if you directed your satirical fire at him?"

The editors did not budge. Khrushchev was tabu to them. But they obviously knew too much about the world not to have some sympathy with my question. They never said so, and perhaps I read too much into what they did not say, or the pauses between my questions and their answers and the looks they exchanged, but I had the feeling that one of their hopes was to be able one day to take on Mr. K. without having to shed a crocodile tear afterwards.

To the visitor from the West the complete lack of any outward emphasis on sex is striking. Film posters are dull as ditch-water, magazine photographs of Russian beauties stress their apple cheeks but no other curves. One foreign diplomat thought that this absence of emphasis on sex testified to the virility of the Russians. A Russian writer laughed and said: "Everything is relative, you know. Some of our Russian films, for instance, that you would consider to be without sex appeal are prohibited in China for being sensual!"

However, Leningrad gave me a somewhat better perspective on eroticism in Russia. First I saw the ballet *Spartacus*, which includes one of the sexiest dances I have ever seen (far sexier than any Western strip-tease show, sexier even than Roland Petit's *Carmen*). It is a seduction scene which, by the time I saw it, had been toned down because of criticism of its "excessive suggestiveness." The second was a visit to the "Field of Mars" around midnight, a more formal version of Hyde Park, where life and love is limited to benches but one of the playing-fields which Billy Graham obviously missed. Finally, a charming and pretty 28-year-old post-graduate student complained to me that her boy friend was not very romantic. "But," she said hopefully, "I bought this dress to-day because he said he liked it. It's rather tight-fitting, don't you think? The latest fashion...." Though it clearly was not one of Dior's Trapeze styles, it hardly seemed tight-fitting. But at that point I was interrupted in my quiet contemplation by her saying: "I hope it will make him romantic."

The one place in Russia where I found hope lacking was in Riga, the old capital of Latvia. While almost everywhere the standard of life in Russia has risen, here and in the other Baltic Republics it has been lowered. Riga's old Hanseatic face, its German and Scandinavian character, has not changed. But since the re-incorporation of Latvia into Russia, life has undergone profound changes. As soon as people in shops or trams knew that I was British they eagerly and anxiously confided in me. Usually in whispers: "We used to read books and newspapers from anywhere in the world. Now the only books we are allowed to import are from East Germany.... We used to have our own little flats. Now we have to share them with two, sometimes three Russians. . . . Almost half the population of Riga now is Russian—it is Moscow's way of making sure there will be no trouble.... Thousands and thousands of Russians have been sent here to settle down and work. The Russian military garrisons are unusually strong...." When I asked the waiter in a restaurant why the coffee in Riga was full of chicory while in Moscow I had real, good coffee, he answered with a dead-pan face: "But we have a very good basketball team here!"

One evening in Riga I went to see a play called *The Aristocrats*, put on by Moscow's Majakovsky Theatre, first produced in the early 'thirties and then a great success. The play is set in a forced labour camp immediately after the Russian revolution, run by the new Soviet Government for the "re-education" of those who refused to support them. The inmates included people from all walks of life, from construction engineers to whores. I sat with a young man who was studying English at the local university. The first act was extraordinarily dramatic. The clash between the camp authorities and the individuals who refused to work for the new government was brilliantly staged and powerfully acted. In the first interval I told my companion I would bet that all the camp inmates would in the end be converted. In disbelief he said: "No, it could not be, it would make a very bad play." I left after the second act because by then everything had become so obvious and repetitious that I could hardly stand it any longer. The student stayed till the end. Next morning he reported, embarrassed and disappointed, that, with the exception of one unimportant character, all saw the light. "It was a bad play, I am sorry to say."

One day in Leningrad, when my electric shaver broke down, I decided to try my luck with a Russian electric shaver. I found that I had a choice between three types—the *Charkovsky*, *Kievsky*, and *Leningradsky*. All were imitations of Western patents: the Remington, Schick, and Philishave, in that order. The *Leningradsky* was considered the best and newest, and seemed well-finished; it looked, in fact, indistinguishable from its Dutch original. The price was about ten pounds. I bought it. For ten days it worked as if it had been the original. But on the tenth day it suddenly petered out. I wondered whether to throw it away, since this was my last day in Russia, or to try to invoke the enclosed guarantee. I decided

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in favour of the latter and drove, with my *Intourist* guide, to the address of the repair shop given in the guarantee. The shop was closed. On the entrance was a sign saying: "THIS REPAIR SHOP IS CLOSED FOR REPAIRS." My guide, an intelligent girl with a usually suppressed sense of humour, burst into laughter. "We must go on to the temporary address given below and get that shaver repaired," she insisted. "Otherwise you will write one of those satirical Ilf-and-Petrov stories about this shaver." I said she would have to go alone because I had an appointment. First she refused, because she said that for me, a foreigner, the repair would be done immediately, while if she went alone it would take days. I encouraged her to speak in my name and to say that I was leaving to-morrow. Finally she agreed.

A few days earlier I had had a discussion with a Russian scientist about the amazing progress the Soviet Union had made in the development of missiles, yet, as Mr. Khrushchev pointed out (in a devastating speech before the plenary session of the Central Committee in June), machinery produced in Russian factories is often so defective as to be unusable. The scientist said that Russia is still very short of good engineers and technicians and that if a State concentrates on one project it can achieve the kind of success that has been achieved in the missile field, but at the cost of progress and perfection elsewhere.

My *Intourist* guide was an hour late picking me up, but from her triumphant smile I knew that she had managed to get the shaver repaired. Back at the hotel I hopefully plugged the shaver in. It worked, but alas, only for about three minutes. Perhaps it is best that my guide will never know of the unhappy end.

ANOTHER kind of "hope in the future" I found reflected in my talk with the Rector of the University of Leningrad. We were talking about the evolution and merits of the new educational reform law Mr. Khrushchev had introduced, which has created much controversy among students, parents, and teachers. "We teachers had long discussions at the Ministry of Education with the authorities before the bill was put in final draft. And I assure you we managed to improve it considerably. The best proof of the useful effect of our discussion, for me at least, was that in the final draft of the bill I found some sentences taken verbatim from the memorandum I had submitted. They related to our need not to over-emphasise Science at the expense of the humanities. . . ."

I asked how it had happened that Moscow had a mammoth university building while Leningrad University, no less important, was still confined to its old rickety building on the Neva. He shrugged his shoulders in slight embarrassment. "The new Leningrad University is part of the Seven-Year Plan, but so far no money has been allocated. I am fighting for it now. Now that we have decentralisation, and more democracy in these matters, it has often become harder to get what one wants. Some people hanker after the times when Moscow allocated the money and also decided what should be done with it. I prefer the new approach. To-day Moscow still allocates the money, but the local government decides how to use it. This means a lot of 'lobbying' as they say in the United States. It's nice to know that our new building is included in the Seven-Year Plan, but I don't want to wait seven years. . . ."

The Moscow University skyscraper, the most imposing building in Moscow, is a symbol of the importance the Soviet Government attaches to "Youth." Mr. Khrushchev puts all his hopes on the new generation; he discounts the last. But I got the definite impression that this new generation, with the exception of a few fanatics, is a-political. It is emphatically interested in material improvement, but not in the State. As one post-graduate student put it to me: "We are a hesitant youth. We believed all we were told about Stalin's greatness, and then we were told that this was all wrong. Whom should we believe now? We prefer to wait. . . ." That does not mean that these students are not alert, intelligent, ambitious. We have read a good deal about the *Stilyagi*, Russia's teddy boys. They exist. One can see them occasionally in the street or on the dance-floor in a café, but they are a small minority. In general the young people are earnest, intensely interested in the world at large, and surprisingly introspective. They are waiting, they are sceptical, they are not revolutionaries. They have no ideas of grandeur or world revolution. They want to settle down to a normal family life, and they are waiting to see whether Mr. Khrushchev can give it to them. That does not mean that they are disloyal or that they are not proud of Russia's growing power. They are only saying as one of them put it to me: "Our country has made such great strides that those people who are trying to hide some of the great drawbacks of our political system are wrong. We hope that, too, will improve with time."

A girl student of about twenty I met at a dance asked me whether I knew an American or English girl, possibly at the embassies, who would like to sell a dress. I retorted with surprise that there were quite nice dresses now available in the shops in Moscow—why would she want a foreign-made dress? "Oh," she replied, "the dresses you can get in Moscow look a little better now, but their quality and cut do not compare with foreign-made dresses. I know one day we will also have as fine dresses as you have in the West. But I want them to-day!"

Henry Brandon

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LETTERS

"Keeping It Dark"

As ON other occasions one can recall, Mr. A. J. P. Taylor [ENCOUNTER, August] spoils a good case by overstating it. He is quite right in alleging that governments are excessively stuffy about exposing official documents to the scrutiny of historians, and that even the recent concession of extending the "fifty-year rule" to Cabinet records means sitting on them for far too long. And of course the occupational disease of archivists and librarians is an allergy to all who invade their treasure-stores.

But it is absurd to suggest that "six months might be a reasonable period"—as absurd to declare that "no one now, for instance, really cares about the Suez affair." Full disclosure of records within any brief period would, presumably, have one inevitable effect: they would contain evidence of even fewer "secrets" than they do now. Mr. Taylor rightly says, "Real secrets are few and far between; discreditable secrets even fewer." This is partly because public affairs are less sinister (and even less rationally contrived) than most political discussions imply—or even as some historians are wont to make them appear afterwards. It is also because many of the considerations that mould events are perfectly well known and publicly discussed at the time. But another reason is that many basic motives for decisions never find their way into written records. They lie buried in men's own minds (maybe discoverable eventually in private papers or memoirs), or in private conversations, face-to-face or by telephone. So I suspect that historians, especially historians of fields other than diplomacy, may always have to rely more on private papers and memoirs, and on their own "hunches," than on formal, official documents. That is why Mr. Taylor is right to attack the habit of suppressing or withholding private papers.

The right period for disclosure should be determined, therefore, in terms of a lapse long enough for politicians and diplomats and civil servants not to feel nervous of the historian breathing down the back of their necks. Otherwise, the men doing the job will soon find ways of concealing from the historian everything that matters: and the historian's plight, of being buried beneath mountains of material, very little of which has significance for his purpose, will be made even worse.

My own guess would be twenty years: recent enough for the working purposes of most historians, long enough not to induce any evasive action by those who wrote the records. Such a concession now would happily carry us to 1939—a date few politicians now active could plausibly refuse, yet one making possible enough detailed study to keep even diplomatic historians happy for years to come. It seems unlikely that any shorter period would be agreed to; and if to acquiesce in more than twenty is craven, to try for much less is both unrealistic and likely to make documents less valuable when historians do lay hands on them.

DAVID THOMSON

The Master's Lodge,
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Brecht and Moscow

THE attack by the Soviet periodical *Inostrannaya Literatura* on my note about Bertolt Brecht's difficulties with the East German Communist régime, to which you refer in *From the Other Shore* in your August number, has its amusing side as well as a depressing one.

We are all eager to see an exchange of ideas and arguments, a genuine dialogue between East and West. This particular instance shows how far apart we still are. The article purports to be a reply to assertions made in the West, but is in fact no such thing; its real purpose is an entirely different one. May I call your readers' attention to this special intellectual sleight of hand?

I had assembled a number of cuttings from the East German Press (poems by Brecht, etc.) which added up to a carefully documented case to the effect that the leading dramatist of the Communist world had become critical of certain aspects of the East German régime, and that the régime in turn had become critical of some of his views and attitudes. Perhaps my interpretation of the evidence I had put forward was wrong. I should have been most interested in hearing the evidence which would have proved my errors. But nothing, literally nothing, which could serve seriously is put forward by *Inostrannaya Literatura*. The evidence I quoted is not even referred to. Instead, the Soviet periodical eagerly seizes on certain statements, such as—who ever doubted it?—the assertion that Brecht had been a Communist since 1930, and quotes them to its readers as a triumphant proof that even the horrid Western critics are "compelled" to admit that Brecht was a Communist (a fact which is, of course, the very starting point of any argument about Brecht's inner-party opposition and "revisionist" views!)

Indeed, the Soviet periodical is not even trying to argue with Western critics. Its purpose is entirely different. It is using the Western article as evidence (independent, non-Communist, and therefore more reliable evidence) that Brecht really *was* a Communist. It can afford to tear sentences out of their context and to ignore the evidence contained in Western periodicals, knowing full well that its readers will never have access to them. But why should *Inostrannaya Literatura* be so eager to marshal evidence from the West that Brecht "was and remains a Communist"? The explanation is simple enough: there is some curiosity and doubt on this point within the Soviet sphere.

When Brecht's company, the *Berliner Ensemble*, toured the Soviet Union in the spring of 1957 (shortly after Brecht died), its members were

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thrilled to find themselves taken up and lionised by the most radical, left-wing, liberal, oppositional Soviet intellectuals, who apparently looked up to them as exponents and embodiments of all their hopes and ideals. The actors of the *Berliner Ensemble* were delighted to be invited to secret recitals of jazz, to be shown hidden stores of abstract art. . . . Delighted, but also surprised. They had not realised that for the intellectuals of the Soviet Union, the *Berliner Ensemble* and Brecht were among the foremost champions of the fight against "Socialist Realism."

How had this happened? Ever since Zhdanov had proclaimed the party line on Socialist Realism in 1934, Brecht had been at loggerheads with the official dogma. He remained a convinced Communist, even a fanatical Marxist. But he also remained convinced that the officially accepted standards of "socialist realism" had nothing to do with Marxist principles. Again and again he was attacked as a "formalist" by Communist critics. Nevertheless, in 1948, the Communist authorities gave him a theatre in East Berlin. They could not afford to lose the propaganda value of one of the leading German intellectuals and *Künstler*. But Brecht's theatre was mainly intended as propaganda for the West. In the East most of his work remained virtually banned up to the time of his death. Yet, in East Berlin, visitors from the Soviet sphere could not be kept from seeing performances in Brecht's theatre. Its fame spread throughout the East. In Poland the influence of the *Berliner Ensemble* is to-day openly acknowledged as one of the starting points of the revival of genuine avant-gardist theatre. No wonder that the young intellectuals in the Soviet Union were eager to see these exponents of "advanced ideas." The official reaction to the visit of the *Berliner Ensemble* was correspondingly sour, though always polite. No play by Brecht, however, has yet reached the Soviet stage in Russia. But the memory of the visit of the *Berliner Ensemble* remains. Brecht has become something of a symbol, a kind of rallying cry for intellectual opposition. And that is why *Inostrannaya Literatura* does not hesitate to use even a passing note in ENCOUNTER to bolster their argument that Brecht was a Communist.

Nevertheless, even if it was not really meant for us, the article in question remains, I believe, a piece of intellectual dishonesty—for to pretend to be arguing a case without mentioning the evidence is decidedly dishonest. Nor—in Brecht's eyes at least—is it good Marxist practice. In Brecht's *Galileo* there is a passage in which Galileo says: "My intention is not to prove that I have been right hitherto, but to find out *whether I am right.*" At this point of the play Brecht always used to interrupt the rehearsal and to point out that this, for a Marxist, was the most important sentence of the play. There is another sentence in the same play which is of relevance to the practices of Soviet propagandists like the editors of *Inostrannaya Literatura.*

> GALILEO: *"And I tell you: He who does not know the truth is merely a stupid fellow. But he who knows the truth and calls it a lie, he is a criminal!"*

MARTIN ESSLIN

London

The B.B.C. and the Establishment

SINCE my listening, such as it is, is mostly confined to the nine o'clock news and concerts (talks are much better read in *The Listener*), it probably ill becomes me to leap to the defence of the B.B.C. after reading Mr. Fairlie's crochety attack on that stately institution.

His attack on the newscasts (including the voices) seemed particularly misguided. May heaven protect us from the busy, omnicompetent, many-voiced newsreadings which Mr. Fairlie seems to want. Newspapers, in a country where the Press is free, have varied viewpoints and assorted hobbyhorses, Trade Unions, Africa, Empire Preference, Scandal, and so on. But to assemble all these into one institution and produce a kind of *olla podrida* every day and several times a day on the air would result in nightmare. I for one do not want the B.B.C. newscasters to discuss or investigate Hola Camp or the Thurso police for me, as Mr. Fairlie thinks they should do. I read two dailies, four weeklies, and ENCOUNTER. Let them do it. Why should Mr. Fairlie expect—or want—the B.B.C. to be a mixture of the *Times*, the *Daily Worker*, and Mr. Colin Wilson?

At one point Mr. Fairlie seems to compare the Press with the B.B.C. to the former's advantage; at another he laments—and I agree with him here—the boredom of interminable B.B.C. narrations of royal progresses hither and yon. But surely several popular newspapers and magazines devote far more time to such things than does the B.B.C.?

Mr. Fairlie grieves that there are not more last-ditch political (or social? or philosophical?) dog-fights on the air, and he does not like chairmen and questionmasters. But why does he think of the B.B.C. as such a powerful and important influence on public-thinking? By and large, it is regarded by the public as a form of entertainment, not as an oracle.

As for giving more of the odd-men-out a chance to put their point—well, I should enjoy it myself. But if you go too far in that direction there would hardly be any air-time left. Those cosy moments with the Radio Doctor (does he still function?)

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would have to be shared by homeopaths, osteopaths, chiropractors, herbalists, naturopaths, and faith-healers. Not only Catholic priests, Anglican vicars, and Free Church pastors would lift up our hearts in the mornings; time would have to be found for Jehovah's Witnesses, Spiritualists, Swedenborgians, Theosophists, and a great many others. It could not stop at politics, this getting-outside-the-Establishment.

And *is* the B.B.C. voice so uniformly Establishment? I seem to remember quite a lot of radio time occupied by Bertrand Russell, J. B. Priestley, George Kennan, Fred Hoyle, Dylan Thomas, and Michael Foot. Not typically Establishment voices.

Ten pages of heavyweight thunder suggest that Mr. Fairlie has an altogether exaggerated idea of the solemn responsibilities of the B.B.C., of its influence on the mental climate of the nation, and certainly of its sins. Some of our popular newspapers, magazines, and advertising are, I think, far more influential and far more deleterious. Anyway, I do not think I should like Mr. Fairlie's formidable Big Brother Corporation.

DORIS ESTCOURT

London

"It's Me !"

I TURNED so eagerly to Mr. Henry Fairlie's article. The Establishment! An outsider, I glimpse through golden gates, seated on benches of alabaster, a company, some of whom I happen to know as individuals, without my having realised that they were members of the Establishment, a thing none has ever mentioned to me.

What is the Establishment? Like Miss Dartle, I ask merely because I wish to know. England is supposed to be run essentially by certain eminent people who have the power to do so. One of their most obvious activities, according to Mr. Fairlie, is "to brainwash the mass of the population in a middling, middle-brow, middle-class culture." It has got that far and I haven't even been able to find or define the oppressive, noisome Thing.

As a sociological entity it seems less scientifically established than the Loch Ness monster or the Flying Saucer, it has affinities with that conspiratorial view of history which assures us at times; "It's the Masons," or "the Jews," or (more probably) "the Scots." It seems to be the slightly less mythical predecessor of Big Brother. At times my genuine efforts to understand have reminded me of the difficulties of the converted Japanese gentleman in understanding the Trinity till he arrived triumphantly beaming: "I see. I understand. It is a kind of committee."

But what has happened now? I read that the Establishment has one voice more powerful than all others. And do you know who that is? I am tempted to answer like Beatrice Lillie letting out with her inimitable shriek the identity of the fairy at the bottom of her garden ("this'll kill you"): "It's ME!"

At any rate for seven years I worked, in a responsible position on news bulletins of the B.B.C., and never knew I was the voice of the Establishment. There were and have been a few hundred others, who, I imagine, will nearly all share my interest in learning what we were up to. Most of us imagined the adventure we were embarked on was pioneering in the new realm of journalism—news that was heard and not read.

When I learn that the B.B.C. is so subservient to authority I can only recall one attempted intervention from above when a directive was read to us that all bulletins must continue to begin with the Royal Family and end with the weather. "And what," growled the news editor, "is the guidance when in a high wind the King is blown off the roof of Buckingham Palace?" The news has a way of being unpredictable. So has the reaction of the public. I remember an incident in which the hand of the Establishment would certainly have been apparent—but for the unpredictable. I was sitting with the Controller on Duty who happened to be the Controller of News now eminent on the *Times*, and surely a rolled-gold member of the Establishment. By a miracle of programme misplanning the two biggest broadcast attractions were going on different programmes at the same time. J. B. Priestley was giving one of his memorable talks after the Home News and Noël Coward for the simultaneous programme had brought along a new song, *"Don't let's be beastly to the Germans."* Whether it was censored or not there would be trouble in the morning. "I don't care," said the Controller blithely. "I have foreseen every ground for complaint and I have all the answers." Scarcely was Noël Coward off the air before the switch-girl announced "a very angry lady." She was. She began: "I've just been listening to Mr. J. B. Priestley singing a disgusting song about the Germans." The picture we presented in our troubles seems to me to bear little relationship to the one presented by Mr. Fairlie, but genuinely trying to understand what is attempted I have been unexpectedly overtaken by a measure of success. I realised that, like the earlier bourgeois gentilhomme, M. Jourdain, who found that he had been talking prose all his life without knowing it, I have been one of the Establishment before those B.B.C. days. I can only suppose by analogy that when we were up, in the microcosm that was our Cambridge of twenty to twenty-five years ago, the Establishment was us—Michael Whitney Straight, Charles Fletcher-Cooke, Geoffrey de Freytas, Robin Maugham, John Simonds, Leonard Miall, Peter Hague, Bernard Waley-Cohen, Lord Dunboyne, the Crompton girls, Lady Rothschild, Dadie Rylands, Mrs. Gordon—I could patter on through their wincing protests and the gratitude of those omitted—but we really didn't know. That's why we never mentioned it. We were innocent and perhaps the worst feature of the Establishment is all the weary talk about it. Beyond its doubtful value as social comedy it is a bogey potentially evil since it belongs to the category of the things (like *U* and *non-U*), which divide men. The emphasis on power makes more difficult the victory of persuasion over force; the very word Establishment

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is an arrogant claim to permanence in a world which is essentially in flux and which longs for a religious faith which will demonstrate enduring values.

FRANK SINGLETON

Moor Platt,
Bolton

"The B.B.C."

THE latest instalment of Mr. Henry Fairlie's fantasy about the Establishment makes fascinating silly season reading. But when I hear the Pecksniffs of Fleet Street going on about Independence and Impartiality and lambasting the poor but honest B.B.C. for its lack of these qualities, I want to punish people—certain people, anyway. Must be the Calvinist in me, or some such damn nonsense. (By the way, when did Mr. Fairlie last read his Calvin?)

Still, I suppose it made a fairly good squib in the campaign to ensure that I.T.V. gets the new third channel and thus keeps the peak listening-hours safe for Independence, Impartiality, and 100 per cent dividends.

DANIEL JENKINS

The King's Weigh House Church,
London

Jazz and the Musical Tradition

WE HAVE had Mr. Thomson's commentary on "the state of contemporary music," and we have had Frank Howes' and Peter Heyworth's commentaries on Mr. Thomson's commentary [ENCOUNTER, January and March]. A wan show so far.

Among themselves they have not even generated a lively argument. Messrs. Howes and Heyworth agree with Mr. Thomson's analysis. They find his conclusion, or his "modest proposal," pessimistic, defeatist, and resigned. Mr. Thomson says, in effect, that it all ended in 1914, or thereabouts, and that there is nothing for it but to make do with inherited materials and forsake the apparently profitless pursuit of originality, innovation, and progress.

Mr. Howes finds this pacific adjustment unthinkable. Bach came at the end of an epoch; composers with something to say can still say it, and "catch the world by surprise."

Mr. Heyworth pleads for the open door, or at least the open mind, for modernism. "Even at the worst," he said, "the human desire to express something in music cannot be extinguished, and sooner or later things will start up again."

It is interesting to find Mr. Thomson taking up 1914 as the approximate date of the completion of the classical musical tradition and to find Messrs. Howes and Heyworth accepting it. This was roughly the date which I offered in my book *The Agony of Modern Music* five years ago, and for which I was roundly damned by both American and British critics. (Mr. Heyworth, rather charitably, called it "as perspicacious and wilfully one-eyed" as anything he had read.) They also accept the reasoning which I offered to support the date, i.e., that the chromatic scale could offer no further expressively effective harmonic devices within the concept of tonality which had determined the course of European music for three hundred years.

But where have these gentlemen been all these years? Are they unaware of a phenomenon known as jazz? Are they unacquainted with the work of Armstrong, Ellington, Henderson, Goodman, and Basie? Have they never heard of Kern, Porter, Gershwin, and Rodgers? Do they not know about Modern Jazz Quartet?

What appalling gall "serious music" critics have! Not once in these commentaries on a discussion of contemporary music is jazz mentioned or even alluded to. All three write about music as if contemporary music may be called such only if dedicated to the perpetuation of the European musical tradition with which they all happen to be identified.

Let Ellington write songs and suites and develop a new kind of orchestra and a new kind of musician, exciting the admiration of most of the world, including the admiration (patronising, to be sure) of the world of classical music! Let Gershwin and Kern and Porter and Rodgers and Berlin write tunes of such sublime melodic invention that they sound fresh and lovely after thirty and forty years! Let Broadway develop a distinctive contemporary musical theatre! Let Armstrong and Ellington and Basie conquer the listening world with a new and distinctive kind of playing, acknowledged even by the highbrows to be rich in invention and originality and in powers of communication.

It's all of no importance because it is not "serious." They call it folk music, or popular music, or commercial music, or music for the masses, and dismiss it as of no importance save possibly as a vulgar source of raw materials for the "serious" composer.

They forget that a sophisticated or art music can afford to be patronising about folk music only when it can, itself, produce something better. This has not been the case with "serious" music for about fifty years.

What Messrs. Thomson, Howes, and Heyworth mean when they talk about "tradition" is, of course, the European tradition, for which they have a high regard, as do I. They ignore the new and far from inglorious American tradition because its expressive objectives and its expressive frame of reference are less pretentious.

But surely fifty years of demonstrable and admitted impotence on the part of the composers seeking to further the European tradition should have taught them not to confuse objective and accomplishment, or, as Hanslick used to say, inclination and talent.

Actually, ours has been an astonishingly productive century musically. It has been rich in talent, vitality, and invention. It has been, possibly, the most dynamic half-century since monodic polyphony gave way to diatonic harmony at the end of the 16th century. The "serious music" critics have been oblivious to it all because the new American music has not conformed to their preconceived notions of what music ought to be and because, regarding it

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from a European point of view, they have not understood it.

Oddly enough, the Americans—and I do not mean the Coplands, Barbers, Pistons, Sessions, and Menottis, all of whom are essentially European traditionalists—have done, unwittingly, exactly what Mr. Thomson thinks the contemporary composer should do. They have used the inherited materials. Their scales, harmonies, rhythms, and forms are all of European origin.

What is new, and what they have from the American Negro, is the explicit beat and the playing musician or singer's swinging relationship to the best. I like to call the result an American music born of the collision of Europe and Africa on American soil.

And the Americans have, of course, returned to a music based on song, and to a song conceived as the lyrical extension of speech. (Mr. Thomson's sneering reference to "that most anti-musical of all instruments, the speaking voice," tells us all we need to know about what is wrong with the contemporary classical composer.)

There is nothing wrong with the contemporary composer except that, having lost his roots in speech and song, he no longer knows what music is. When it is possible for the President of the International Society for Contemporary Music to refer to the "empty and degenerate formulae of melodic music," as Heinrich Strobel did in Rome this year, then the jig is up, and no one should be surprised.

At the end of *The Agony of Modern Music* I was moved by my wilfully one-eyed perspicacity to state that "jazz is modern music and nothing else is." In times past the critics have earned the opprobrium of their heirs by disparaging the music of their own time. For the present generation of music critics has been reserved the unique and unhappy distinction of not having known what it was!

HENRY PLEASANTS

Geneva

"Mammy"

MAY I put forward the suggestion that both Leonard Woolf and Edwina Rubenstein [ENCOUNTER, July and September] have misinterpreted the cry "Go back to your black mammy!" In West Africa "to keep a mammy" means "to keep an (African) mistress." This surely is the type of accusation which a settler community would very readily bring against anyone such as Mr. Stonehouse whom they wished to ridicule as a "nigger lover."

Is there any reader of ENCOUNTER who can confirm that "mammy" has this significance in Central Africa, as it undoubtedly has in Ghana and Nigeria?

M. C. POWELL

Barbourne,
Worcester

Northcliffe

IT IS of historical interest that Malcolm Muggeridge, as late as 1959, should refer to psychoanalysis as if it were an interesting little sideline, like, for example, chiropody ["Northcliffe," ENCOUNTER, July].

If the theory of the unconscious is correct, and if the techniques of psychoanalysis are in the least degree effective, as he appears to admit, then this discovery should bulk as large in History as, for example, Socrates or Aristotle or Aquinas. It is odd that it should still be regarded by a literary man as a bagatelle.

Is this perhaps caused by "The Two Cultures"? Psychoanalysis is a science.

ROLAND BERRILL

Eastbourne

Christmas Forethought

Somewhere in this issue you should find a leaflet giving details of ENCOUNTER's Christmas Gift Offer. This enables you, at considerably reduced rates, to send subscriptions to your friends, relatives or business acquaintances anywhere in the world. If the leaflet is missing, simply send the names and addresses of your friends (who should not, as far as you know, already be buying the magazine), with 17s. (six months) or 30s. (one year) for each, to ENCOUNTER, 25 Haymarket, London S.W.1. American donors should send $3·00 or $6·00. Your gifts will start with the January issue (out just before Christmas) and an announcement card will be sent to each recipient.

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AUTHORS

THIS self-portrait which Wolfdietrich Schnurre has sent on to us from Berlin (in reply to our usual autobiographical request) does not, of course, tell the whole story. He is, to be sure, tall, mustachioed, and turned somewhat *innerlich*. He was born in 1920, and grew up in the proletarian north-east of Berlin (he remembers the schoolboys' general strike when the Nazis came in). In the war he had nothing but trouble; arrested in Poland, arrested in France ("subversive of military discipline"), and in Russia he found himself in a *Strafkompanie* whose punishment consisted of suicidal missions against enemy mines. When he finally ran away the German Army caught up with him; it was running faster. After the war he joined the *Gruppe 47* which has since become a well-known German group of young writers. Among his recent published books is a novel, a book of poems, a collection of radio plays, and several volumes of short stories. Is married. Owns two black poodles. . . . **Elizabeth Hardwick** is a novelist and critic, a frequent contributor to *Partisan Review* and *The New Yorker*, is married to the poet Robert Lowell, and lives (needless to say) in Boston. . . . . **Joseph Alsop,** whose most recent ENCOUNTER contributions were "The Washington Correspondent" (Jan. 59) and "The New Balance of Power" (May 58), has just returned from a trip to Laos (and his "dismal depressing weeks on that front" have evidently left their mark). . . . **Richard Wollheim** teaches philosophy at the University of London, and has just departed for New York to be visiting lecturer at Columbia University . . . . **Colin Wilson's** most recent book (the violence of the reviewer's reaction to which prompted his critical and self-critical remarks) is *The Age of Defeat* (Gollancz) . . . **Marjorie Grene** teaches at Leeds University, and has published *Existentialist Philosophy* and *Martin Heidegger*.

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Frank Norman
STAND ON ME

Encounter readers will have no difficulty in remembering Frank Norman, because of the extracts from his first book, *Bang to Rights*, which appeared in these pages last year. In *Stand on Me*, he turns from his hilarious description of prison life, to the time when he was a free agent around Soho—the Soho of ponces, bums, petty thieves and dope addicts, the "layabouts" of London's underworld—a world which is totally, frighteningly amoral. He has been part of it, and he has to his enormous credit emerged successfully from it. Now, he shows himself a born story-teller in bringing it uncannily alive. 16*s*.

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